

THE
Sound Believer.

A
T R E A T I S E
O F.

Evangelical Conversion.

Discovering the Work of Christ's
Spirit, in reconciling of a Sin-
ner to God.

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Matth. 18. 11. *I came to save that which
was lost.*

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To his dear Friend,
Mr. W. Greenhill.

SIR,

MY Strugglings I have had about publishing these Notes: I have looked up to God, and at last been persuaded upon these Grounds,

1. The many Desires both of Friends and Strangers, both by private Speeches and Letters, which I thought might be the Voice of Christ.

2. Some good (as I hear) those which are already out have done, and which the rest might do, which I have looked on as a testimony of the Lord's acceptance of them.

3. I knew not what the Lord's meaning should be to bring to light by his Providence, without any privity, knowledge or will, the former Part, unless it was to awaken and enforce me (being desired) to publish the rest; our Works, I thought, should resemble God's Works, not be left imperfect.

4. I considered my weak Body, and my short Time of sojourning here, and that I shall not speak long to Children, Friends, or God's precious People; I am sure not so many in England, to whom I owe almost my

whole self, whom I shall see in this World no more; I have been therefore willing to get the Wind, and take the Season, that I might leave some part of God's precious Truth on Record, that it might speak (oh that it may be to the Heart !) among whom I cannot (and when I shall not) be. I account it a part of God's infinite Grace, to make me an Instrument of the least Good to any. If the Lord shall so far accept of me, in publishing these Things, it is all that I would desire; if not, yet I have desired forgiveness in the Blood of his Son, for whatever Errors or weaknesses may be in it, or are in my self, which may hinder Success, and frustrate its End; only what I have in much weakness believed, I have written, and sent it unto you, leaving it wholly with your self, whom I much love and honour, that you would add or detract any thing you see meet, (so as it be not cross to what I have writ) and if you then think it meet for publick View, you see upon what Grounds I am content with it; but if you shall bury it in silence, it shall be most pleasing to him, who thinks more meanly of it than others can.

6. AP. 64

Tho. Shepard.

THE Sound Believer.

C H A P. I.

As the great Cause of the eternal Perdition of Men is of themselves, so the only Cause of the actual Deliverance and Salvation of Man is Jesus Christ: View this text.

HOSEA XIII. ix.

Ob Israel thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy Help.

S E C T. I.

THESE Words as they are set down in the Hebrew, are (according to the Style of this Prophet) very short and sententious, and therefore difficult to translate into English without some Periphrasis; but the Sense is here truly express'd, *In me is thy Help*; which you may see confirmed from v. 4, *There is no Saviour beside me*; and v. 14, *I will ransom them*.

Then from the Power of the Grave, O Death I will be thy plague, O Grave I will be thy destruction. Suppose the Prophet should speak here of temporal Salvation, Help and Ransom, (which he doth not) yet the Argument is strong ; if there be no Saviour from temporal Woe and Misery, but only the Lord Jesus, how much more is there from Woes eternal ? Only understand me here aright ; I am not now speaking of Man's Deliverance and Salvation by Price, in way of Satisfaction to Justice (for that I have already handled) but of his Deliverance and Salvation by Power ; not of Man's purchased Deliverance, which is by the Blood of Christ, but of Man's actual Deliverance, which is by the Efficacy and Power of the Spirit of Christ. Some Captives among Men are redeemed by Price only, some by Power without Price ; but such is the lamentable Captivity of all Men, under the severity of Justice, and Power of Sin, that without the Price of Christ's Blood, Ephes. 1. 7. and the Power of Christ's Spirit, Job. 8. 36. there is no Deliverance ; the Lord Jesus having paid the Price for our Deliverance. Yet it is with us, as with a Company of Captives in Prison ; our Sins like Strong Chains hold us, Satan, our Keeper, will not let us go, the Prison Doors, through Unbelief, are shut upon us, Rom. 11. 32. and thereby God and Christ are kept out from us ; what Power can rescue us, that are held fast under such a Power, even after the Price is paid ? Truly it can be no other but that in my Text *In me is thy Help* : When our Ransom is paid, the Lord himself must come and fetch us out by a strong Hand, *Essay 53. 1. To whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed ? Truly to very few*

few, yet to some it is; and certainly look as they made Christ no Saviour indeed, who deny his Salvation by Price and Satisfaction; so those also make him an imperfect Saviour, who deny Salvation and actual Deliverance of Man, to be only the almighty Arm and Efficacy of his Spirit and Power: Excellent therefore is the Speech of the Apostle, *Acts 5. 30, 31.* *God hath exalted Jesus to give Repentance and Remission of Sins unto Israel;* look as Jesus was abased to purchase Repentance and Remission, so he is now exalted actually to give and apply Repentance and Remission of Sins. Whose Glory is it to remit Sins, but God's in Christ, and by Christ only? Whose Glory is it to give Repentance (which, in this Place, comprehends the Work of Conversion & Faith, as Beza observes) whereby we apply Remission, but the same God only? The one is as difficult to be conveyed as the other, and we stand in as much need of Christ to do the one as the other; all the Power of Christ exalted, is little enough to give us Repentance and Remission, the Condition of the Covenant express'd in Repentance, and the Blessings in the Covenant, summed up in the Forgiveness of Sins; the Socinians deny Redemption and Salvation by Price; the Armenians by Christ's Power, leaving suasion only to him, but Power of Conversion to the Power and Liberty of the Will of Man; O adulterous Generation, that are thus hacking and cutting the Cords of their own Salvation! I shall here speak only to one Question, which is the principal and most profitable, and that is this,

Quest. *How doth Christ redeem and save us by his Power, out of that miserable Estate; and consequently what*

what is the way for us to seek, and so to find and feel Deliverance by the Hand of Christ's Power?

Ans. As there are four principal Means and Causes, or Ways, whereby Man ruins himself.

1. Ignorance of their own Misery.
2. Security and un-sensibleness of it.
3. Carnal Confidence in their own Duties.
4. Presumption or resting upon the Mercy of God by a Faith of their own forging.

So on the contrary, there is a four-fold Act of Christ's Power, whereby he rescues and delivers all his out of their miserable Estate.

The first Act or Stroke is Conviction of Sin.

The second is Compunction for Sin.

The third is Humiliation, or Self-abasement.

The fourth is Faith.

All which are distinctly put forth (when he easeth extraordinarily to work) in the Day of Christ's Power; and who ever look for actual Salvation and Redemption from Christ, let them seek for Mercy and Deliverance in this way; out of which, they shall never find it; let them begin at Conviction, and desire the Lord to let them see their Sins, that so, being affected with them, and humbled under them, they may, by Faith, be enabled to receive Jesus Christ, and so be blessed in him. It is true, Christ is applied to us nextly by Faith, but Faith is wrought in us in that Way of Conviction, and Sorrow for Sin; no Man can or will come by Faith to Christ, to take away his Sins, unless he first see, be convicted of, and loaden with them. I confess the Manner of the Spirit's Work in the Conversion of a Sinner unto God, is exceeding secret, and in many Things very various; and therefore it is too great boldness to mark out

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all God's Footsteps herein: Yet so far forth as the Lord himself tells us his Work, and the Manner of it in all his, we may safely resolve ourselves, and so far, and no farther, shall we proceed in the Explication of these Things. It is great Prophaness not to search into the Works of common Providence, though secret and hidden, *Psalm 18. 5.* and *92. 6.* much greater is it, not to do thus unto God's Work of especial Favour and Grace upon his chosen.

I shall therefore begin with the first Stroak of Christ's Power, which is the *Conviction of Sin.*

S E C T. II.

The first Act of Christ's Power, which is the Conviction of Sin.

NO W for the more distinct Explication of this, I shall open to you these four Things.

1. I shall prove, *That the Lord Christ by his Spirit, begins the actual Deliverance of his Elect here.*
2. *What is that Sin the Lord convinceth the Soul thus first of.*
3. *How the Lord doth it.*
4. *What Measure and Degree of Conviction he works thus in all his.*

1. *For the first,* It is said, *Job. 16. 8, 9.* that the first Thing that the Spirit doth when he comes to make the Apostle's Ministry effectual, is this, *It shall reprove or convince the World of Sin;* it doth not first work Faith, but convinceth them that they have no Faith, as in *Verse 9.* and consequently un-

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der the Guilt and Dominion of their Sin; and after this, he *convinceth of Righteousness*, which Faith apprehends, *Verse 10*. It is true that the Word *Conviction* here, is of a large extent, and includes Compunction and Humiliation for Sin, yet our Saviour wraps them up in this Word; because *Conviction* is the first, & therefore the Chief in order; here the Lord is not speaking now of ineffectual, but effectual and thorough Conviction, express'd in deep Sorrow and Humiliation. Now the Text faith, the Lord begins not thus with some one or two, but with the *World* of God's Elect, who are to be called home by the Ministry of the Word; which our Saviour speaks (as any may see who considers the scope) purposely to comfort the Hearts of his Disciples, that their Ministry shall be thus effectual to the *World* of Jews and Gentiles; and therefore cannot speak of such *Conviction* as serves only for to leave Men, without Excuse, for greater Condemnation; (as some understand the Place) for that is a poor Ground of Consolation to their sad Hearts. *Secondly*, I shall hereafter prove that there can be no Faith without Sense of Sin and Misery; and now there can be no Sense of Sin without a precedent Sight or Conviction of Sin; no Man can feel Sin, unless he doth first see it; what the Eyes sees not the Heart rues not. Let the greatest Evil befall a Man, suppose the burning of his House, the death of his Children, if he doth not first know, see and hear of it, he will never take it to Heart, it will never trouble him; so let a poor Sinner lye under the greatest Guilt, the sorest Wrath of God, it will never trouble him until he sees it and be convinced of it,

Acts 2. 37. When they heard this they were pricked ; but first they heard it and saw their Sin, before their Hearts were wounded for it, *Gen. 3. 7.* they first saw their Nakedness, before they were ashamed of it. *Thirdly,* The main End of the Law is to drive us to Christ, *Rom. 10. 4.* If Christ be the End of the Law, then the Law is the Means subservient to that End, and that not to *some*, but to *all that believe* ; now the Law through it drives us to Christ by Condemnation, yet in order, it begins with Accusation. It first accuseth, and so convinceth of Sin, *Rom. 3. 20.* and then condemneth. Its Folly and Injustice for a Judge to Condemn and bring a Sinner to Execution before Accusation and Conviction ; and is it Wisdom or Justice in the Lord to do otherwise ? And therefore the Spirit in making use of the Law for this End, first Convinceth as it first Accuseth, and lays our Sins to our Charge. *Lastly,* Look as Satan when he binds up a Sinner in his Sin, he first keeps him (if possible) from the very Sight and Knowledge of it ; because so long as they see it not, this Ignorance is the Cause of all their Woe ; why they feel it not, why they desire not to come out of it ; the Lord Jesus (who came to untie the Knots of Satan, *1. Joh. 3. 8.*) begins here, and first Convinceth his, and makes them see their Sin, that so they may feel it, and come to him for Deliverance out of it. O consider this, all you that dream out your Time in minding only Things before your Feet, never thinking on the Evils of your own Hearts ; you that heed not, you that will not see your Sins, not so much as ask this Question, What have I done ? What do I do ? How do I live ? What will be-
come

come of me ? What will be the End of these my foolish Courses ? I tell you if ever the Lord save you, he will make you see what you cannot, what you now will not ; he will not only make you to confess you are Sinners, but he will convince you of Sin, this shall be the first Thing the Lord will do with thee.

Quest. But you will say, *What is that Sin which the Lord first Convinceth of ?* Which is the second Thing to be opened. I answer in these three Conclusions.

Ans^w. Con. 1. The Lord Jesus by his Spirit doth not only convince the Soul in general, that it is a Sinner, and sinful; but the Lord brings in a convicting Evidence of the Particulars; the first is learnt more by Tradition (in these Days) by the Report and acknowledgment of every Man, rather than by any special Conviction of the Spirit of Christ; for what Man is there almost but lies under this Confession that he is a Sinner ? the best say they are Sinners, and if we say we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and I know I am a Sinner; but that which the Spirit principally convinceth of, is some Sin or Sins in particular: The Spirit doth not arrest Men for Offences in general, but opens the Writ, and shews them the Particular Cause, the particular Sins, Rom. 3. 9. We have proved saith the Apostle, that Jews and Gentiles are under Sin, but how doth the Apostle (being now the Instrument of the Spirit, in this Work of Conviction) convince them of this ? Mark his Method, Verse 10. to 18. wherein you shall see it done by enumeration of Particulars; Sins of their Natures, there is none Righteous; Sins of their Minds, none understandeth

standeth; sins in their Wills and Affections, ~~none~~ seek after God; sins in their Lives, all gone out of the way; sins of Omission of good Duties, ~~their~~ is none that doeth good, their Throats, Tongues, Lips, are Sepulchres, deceitful, poisonous, their Mouths full of cursing, their Feet swift to shed Blood, &c. And this is the State of you Jews, (verse 14.) as well as of the Gentiles, ~~that~~ all Flesh may stand convinced as guilty before God. If it be here demanded, What are those particular Sins which the Lord convinceth Men of? I Answer, In variety of Men there is much variety of special Sins, as there is of Dispositions, Tempers, and Temptations; and therefore the Lord doth not convince one Man at first of the same Sins of which he doth another Man, yet this we may safely say, usually (though not always) the Lord begins with the Remembrance and Consideration of some one great, if not a Man's special and most beloved Sin; and thereby the Spirit discovers gradually all the rest: that Arrow which woundeth the Heart of Christ most, the Lord makes it fall first upon the Head of the Sinner that did shoot it against Heaven, and convinceth, and as it were hits him first with that. How did the Spirit convince those 3000, those Patterns of God's converting Grace? *Acts 2. 37.* Did not the Lord begin with them for one principal Sin, viz. their Murder & Contempt of Christ, by immuring their Hands in his Blood? There is no Question but now they remembred other sinful Practices, but this was the *Imprimis*, which is ever accompanied with many other *Items*, which are then read in God's Bill of Reckonings where the first is set down. *Israel would have a King, 1 Sam. 8. 19.*

Samuel, for a Time, could not convince them of their Sin ; herein what doth the Lord do ? surely he will convince them of Sin before he leaves them, and this he doth by such a terrible Thunder as made all their Hearts ake ; and how is it now ? what Sin do they now see ? They first see the greatness of that particular Sin ; but this came not to Mind alone, but they cryed out, 1 Sam. 12. 19. *We have added unto all our Evils this, in asking to our selves a King.* Look upon the Woman of Samaria, John 4. The Lord Christ indeed spake first unto her about himself the Substance of the Gospel, about the Worth of this Water of Life ; but what good did she get until the Lord began to convince her of Sin, and how doth he that, he tells her of her secret Whoredom she lived in, *the Man that she now had was not her Husband* ; and upon the Discovery of this, she saw many more Sins ; and hence verse 29, she crys out, *Come see the Man that hath told me all that ever I did in my Life.* And thus the Lord deals at this Day ; the Minister preacheth against one Sin, it may be Whoredom, Ignorance, Contempt of the Gospel, Neglect of secret Duties, Lying, Sabbath-breaking, &c. This is thy case, saith the Spirit unto the Soul, remeber the Time, the Place, the Persons with whom you lived in this sinful Condition ; and now a Man begins to go alone, and to think of all his former Courses how exceeding evil they have been ; it may be the Lord brings upon a Man a sore Affliction, and when he is in Chains crying out of that, the Lord saith to him as to those, Jer. 30. 15. *Why cryest thou for thy Affliction ? for the multitude of thine Iniquities I have done this* ; it may be

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the Lord sometimes strikes a Man's Companion in Sin dead, by some fearful Judgment: and then that particular Sin comes to mind, and the Lord reveals it arm'd with a multitude of many other Sins, the Causes of it, the Fruits and Effects of it: as the Father whips a Child upon occasion of one special Fault, but then tells him of many more which he winked at before this, and tells him, Now, Sirrah, remember such a Time, such a forward Fit, such undutiful Behaviour, such a reviling Word you spake, such a Time I called, and you ran away and would not hear me, and you thought I liked well enough of these Ways, but now know that I will not pass them by, &c. Thus the Lord deals with his, and hence it is many Times, that the Elect of God civilly brought up, do hereupon think well of themselves, and so remain long unconvinced of their woful Estates, the Lord suffers them to fall into some foul, secret, or open Sin, and by this the Lord takes special Occasion of working Conviction & Sorrow for Sin, the Lord hereby makes them hang down the Head, and cry, *Unclean, unclean*: Paul was civilly educated, he turn'd at last a hot Persecutor, Oppressor, Blasphemer: The Lord first convinced him of his Persecution, and cryed out from Heaven to him, *Paul, Paul, Why persecutest thou me?* This struck him to the Heart, and then *Sin revived*, Rom. 7. 9. Many secret Sins of his Heart were then discovered, which I take to begin and continue in special in those three Days, *Acts 3. 9.* wherein he was blind and did (through sight of Sin and sorrow of Heart) neither eat nor drink. As a Man that hath the Plague not knowing the Disease, he

hopes to live ; but when he sees the Spots and Tokens of Death upon his Wrist, now he crys out, because convinced that the Plague of the Lord is upon him ; so when Men see one or more special Sins break out, now they are convinced of their lamentable Condition ; yet it is not alway (though usually thus) for some Men the Lord may first convince of Sin by shewing them the sinfulness of their own Hearts and Ways ; the Lord may let a Man see his Blindness, his extream Hardness of Heart, his Weakness, his Wilfulness, his Heartlessness ; he cannot pray, or look up to God, and this may first convince him ; or all that he doth is sinful, being out of Christ : the Lord may suddenly let him see the deceits of his own Heart, and the secret sinful Practices of his Life ; as if some had told the Minister, or as he spake to none but him ; that he is forced to fall down being thus convinced, and to confess, *God is in this Men* : 1 Cor. 14. 25. Nicodemus may first see and be convinced of the want of Regeneration, and thereby feel his need of Christ ; the Lord may set a Man upon the Consideration of all his Life past, how wickedly it hath been spent ; and so not one, but a Multitude of Iniquities compass him about, a Man may see the godly Examples of his Parents or other godly Christians in the Family or Town where he dwells, and by this be convinced, that if their State and Way be good, his own (so far unlike it) must needs be stark naught : The Lord ever convinceth the Soul of Sins in particular, but he doth not alway convince one Man of the same particular Sins at first as he doth another, whether the Lord convinceth all the Elect at first of the

the Sin of their Nature, & shew them their original Sin in and about this first Stroke of Conviction, I doubt not of it, *Paul* would have been alive, and a proud Pharisee still, if the Lord had not let him by the Law see this Sin, *Rom. 7. 9.* And so would all Men in the World, if this should not be revealed first or last, in a lesser or greater Measure, under a distinct or more indistinct Notion: & hence arise those Confessions of the Saints, I never thought I had such a vile Heart, if all the World had told me, I could not have believed them, but that the Lord hath made me feel it, and see it at last; was there ever such a Sinner (at least in Heart) which is continually opposing of him) whom the Lord at any time received to Mercy, as I am?

Con. 2. The Lord Jesus by his Spirit doth not only convince the Soul of its Sin in particular, but also of the Evil, even the exceeding great Evil of those particular Sins. The Lord Jesus doth not only convince of the Evil of Sin, but of the great Evil of Sin. Oh thou Wretch saith the Spirit, (as the Lord to *Cain, Gen. 4. 10.*) what hast thou done, whose Sins cry to Heaven, who hast thus long lived without God, & done this infinite wrong to an infinite God, for which thou canst never make him amends! That God who could have long since cut thee off in the midst of thy Sins and Wickedness, and crush thee like a Moth, and sent thee down to these eternal Flames where thou now seest some better than thy self mourning Day and Night, but yet hath spared thee out of his mere Pity to thee; That God hast thou resisted and forsaken all thy Life-time; and therefore now see and consider what an evil and bitter Thing it is.

is, thus to live as thou hast done, *Jer. 2. 19.* Look, as it is in the Ways of Holiness, many a Man void of the Spirit, may see and know them in the literal Expressions of them, but cannot see the Glory of them but by the Spirit, and hence it is he doth not esteem and prize them and the knowledge of them above Gold : So in the Ways of Unholiness, many a Man void of the Spirit of Conviction of Sin, may, and doth, see many particular Sins and confess them, but he doth not cannot see the exceeding Evil of them, and thence it is, though he doth see them yet he doth not much dislike them, because he sees not the great Hurt or Evil in them, but makes a light Matter of them ; and therefore when the Spirit comes, it lets him see and stand convinced of the exceeding greatness of the Evil that is in them, *Job 36. 8, 9.* In the Time of Affliction (which is usually the Time of Conviction of a wild unruly Sinner) he shews them their *Transgressions*, but how ? *That they have exceeded*, that they have been exceeding many and exceeding vile. Oh beloved, before the Lord Jesus comes to convince, we have Cause to pray for and Pity every poor Sinner, as the Lord Jesus did, *Saying Lord forgive them, they know not what they do.* You godly Parents, Masters, how oft do you instruct your Children, Servants, and convince them of their sinfulness, until they confess their Faults ? Yet you see no amendment, but they go on still ; what should you now do ? Oh cry out for them, and say, *Lord forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Their Sins they know, but what the Evil of them is, alas ! they know not ; but when the Spirit comes to convince, he makes them see.

fee what they do, and what is the exceeding Evil of those Sins they made light of before; like mad Men that have sworn, and curst, and struck their Friends, and when they come to be sober again, and remember their mischievous Ways, and how abominable their Courses were. Oh you that walk on in the Madness of your Minds now, in all manner of Sin, if ever the Lord do good to you, you shall account your ways Madness and Folly, and cry out, Oh Lord, what have I done in kicking thus long against the Pricks?

Con. 3. The Lord Jesus by his Spirit doth not only convince the Soul of the evil of *Sin*, but of the evil *after Sin*, I mean the just Punishment which doth follow Sin, and that is this, *viz.* That it must die, and that eternally for Sin, if it remain in this Estate it is now in, Rom. 4. 15. *The Law works Wrath*, *i. e.* sight and sense of Wrath, Rom. 7. 9. *When the Law came, Sin revived and I died*, *i. e.* I saw my self a dead Man by it; so the Soul sees clearly, God hath said, *The Soul that sinneth shall die*: I have sinned, and therefore if the Lord be true, I shall die; to Hell I shall if the Lord stop my Breath, and cut off my Life, which he might justly and may easily do. *Death is the wages of Sin*, even of any one Sin, though never so little; what then will become of me, who stand guilty of so many, exceeding the number of the Hairs on my Head, or the Stars in Heaven? *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*, the Minister hath said so, the Lord himself hath told me so, Heb. 13. 4. I am the Man, my Conscience now tears me and tells me so, what will become of me? *The Lord Jesus will come in flaming Fire, to render Vengeance* *going*

gainst all that know not God ; and that obey not the Gospel, This I believe, for God hath said it, 1 Thes. 2. 7, 8, 9. and now I see that I am he that hath lived long in Ignorance and know not God ; I have had the Gospel of Grace thus long wooing and perswading my Heart, and oftentimes it hath affected me, but yet I have resisted God and his Gospel, and have set my filthy Lusts, my vain Sports, my Companions, Cups and Queens at a higher Price than Christ, and have loved them more than him ; and therefore, though I may be spared for a while, yet there is a Time wherein Christ himself will come out against me in flaming Fire. To this Purpose doth the Spirit work : For beloved the great Means whereby Satan overthrew Man at first in his Innocency, was this Principle, altho' thou dost eat, and so sin against God, yet thou shalt not die, Gen. 3. 4. *Ye shall not surely die*, the Serpent doth say, *Ye shall not die*, for that is too gross an out-facing of the Word, Gen. 2. 17. but saith *Ye shall not surely die* ; that is, there is not such absolute certainty of it ; it may be you shall live, God loves you better than so, and is a more merciful Father than to be at a Word and a Blow. Now look as Satan deceived and brought our first Parents to ruin, by suggesting this Principle ; so at this Day he doth sow this accursed Seed, and plant this accursed Principle in the Soil of every Man's Heart by Nature ; they do not think, they cannot believe they are dead Men, and condemned to die, and that they shall die eternally for the least Sin committed by them ; Men nor Angels cannot persuade them of it, they cannot see the equity of it, that God so merciful will be so severer, for so small

a Matter ; nor yet the truth of it, for then they think no flesh should be saved ; and thus when the old Serpent hath spit his Poison before them, they sup it up, and drink it in, and so Thousands, nay Millions of Men and Women are undone. The Lord Christ therefore when he comes to save a poor Sinner, and raise him up out of his Fall, convinceth the Soul by his Spirit, and that with full and mighty Evidence, that it shall die for the least Sin, and tells him as the Lord told *Abimelech* in another case, Gen. 20. 3. *Thou art but a dead Man for this* ; and if the Spirit set on this, let who can claw it off. I tell you beloved, never did poor condemned Malefactor more certainly know and hear the sentence of Condemnation past upon him by a mortal Man, than the guilty Sinner doth his, by an immortal and displeased God ; and therefore these Three thousand cry out, *Acts 2.37.* *Men and Brethren, what shall we do to be saved?* We are condemned to die, what shall we do now to be saved from Death ? Now the Soul is glad to enquire of the Minister, Oh tell me what shall I do ? I once thought my self in a safe and good Condition as any in the Town or Country I lived in ; but now the Lord hath let me hear of other News ; die I must in this Estate, and 'tis a wonder of Mercies I am spared alive to this Day. There is not only some blind Fears and Suspicions that it may possibly be so, but full Perswasions of Heart, die I must, die I shall in this Estate ; for if the Spirit reveal Sin, and convince not of Death for Sin, the Soul under this work of Conviction being as yet rather sensual than spiritual, will make a light Matter of it, when it sees no sensible

ble Danger in it, but when it sees the bottomless Pit before it, everlasting Fire before it, for the least Sin, now it sees the heinous Evil of Sin ; the way of Sin though never so peaceable before, is full of Danger now, wherein it sees there are endless Woes and everlasting Deaths that lye in wait for it, *Rom. 6. 21.* And now saith the Spirit you may go on in these sinful Courses as others do, if you see meet, but O consider what will be the End of them ; what it is to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a season, and to be tormented for ever for them in the Conclusion, for be assured that will be the end : and hence the Soul seeing it self thus set apart for Death, looks upon it self in a far worse Estate than the brute Beasts, or vilest Worm upon the Earth ; for it thinks, when they die there is an End of their Misery, but Oh then is the beginning of mine for ever : hence also arise those Fears of Death and of being suddenly cut off, that when it lyes down, it trembles to think I may never rise again, because it's convinced, not only that it deserves to dye, but that it is already sentenced for to die : hence also the Soul justifies God, if he had cut him off in his Sin ; and wonders what kept him from it, there being nothing else due from God unto it : hence lastly, the Soul is stopt and stands still, goes not on in Sin as before ; or if he doth, the Lord gives it no peace, *Jer. 8. 6.* Why doth the Horse go on in the Battle ? because it sees not Death before it ; but now the Soul sees Death, and therefore stops : O remember this all you that never could believe that you are dead condemned Men, and therefore are never troubled with any such Thoughts in your Minds ; I tell

tell you that you are far from Conviction, and therefore far from Salvation : if God should send some from the dead to bear Witness against this secure World concerning this Truth, yet you will not believe it, for his Messengers sent from Heaven are not believed herein ; wo be to you if you remain unconvinced of this Point.

3. But you will say, how doth the Lord thus convince Sin, and wherein is it express'd ? which is the third particular.

Ans^w. All Knowledge of Sin is not Conviction of Sin, all Confession of Sin is not Conviction ; there is a Conviction meerly rational, which is not spiritual ; there are three Things in spiritual Conviction.

1. There is a clear, certain, & manifest Light, so that the Soul sees its Sin, and Death due to it clearly and certainly ; for so the word, *Job. 16. 9.* ἐπενειν signifies to evidence a Thing by way of Argumentation, nay Demonstration ; the Spirit so demonstrates these Things that it hath nothing to object, a Man's Mouth is stopped, he hath nothing to say but this ; behold I am vile, I am a dead Man : for if a Man have many strong Arguments given him to confirm a Truth, yet if he have but one Objection or doubtful Scruple not answered, he is not fully as yet convinced, because full Conviction by a clear Sun-light scatters all dark Objections, and hence our Saviour, *Jude 15.* will one Day convince the Wicked of all their hard Speeches against him, which will chiefly be done by manifesting the Evil of such Ways, and taking away all those Colours & Defences Men have made for their Language : before the Spirit of Christ

comes

comes, Man cannot see, will not see his Sin nor Punishment ; nay, he hath many Things to say for himself as Excuses and Extenuations of Sin ; One faith, I was drawn into it, (*the Woman that thou gavest me*) and so lays the Blame on others ; Another faith, It is my Nature ; others say, All are Sinners, the godly sin as well as others ; and yet are saved at last, & so I hope I shall : Others profess they cannot part with Sin, they would be better, but they cannot, and God requires no more then they are able to perform : Another faith, I will continue in Sin but a little while, and purpose hereafter to leaye it : Others say, We are Sinners, but yet God is merciful and will forgive it : Another faith, Though I have sinned, yet I have some good, and am not so bad as other Men : Endless are these Excuses for Sin. In one Word, I know no Man, tho' never so bad, tho' his Sin be never so grievous, but he hath something to say for himself, and something in his Mind to lessen and extenuate Sin : but, beloved, when the Spirit comes to convince, he so convinceth as that he answers all these, pulls down all these Fences, tears off all these Fig-leaves, scatters all these Mists, and pulls off all these Scales from the Eyes, stops a Man's Mouth, that the Soul stands before God, crying, O Lord, guilty, guilty ; as the Prophet Jeremy told them, Jer. 2. 23. *Why dost thou say, I am innocent ? look upon thy Way, &c.* so the Spirit saith, why dost thou say thy Sin is small ? it is disobedience, (as Samuel said to Saul, 1 Sam. 15. 23.) which is Rebellion, and as the Sin of Witchcraft, and is that a small Matter ? The Spirit of Conviction by the clear Evidence of the

Truth,

truth, binds the understanding that it cannot struggle against God any more, and hence let all the world plead to the contrary, nay let the godly come to comfort them in this estate, and think and speak well of them, yet they cannot believe them because they are certain their estates are woful: hence also we shall observe the soul under conviction, instead of excusing sin; it aggravates sin, and studies to aggravate sin, did ever any deal thus wickedly, walk thus sinfully, so long, against so many checks and chidings, light & love, means and mercies, as I have done? And it is wonderful to observe that those things which made it once account sin light, make it therefore to think sin greater: *ex. gr.* my sin is little, the more unkind thou (faith the spirit) that wilt not do a small matter for the Lord: my sin is common; the more sinful thou, that in those things wherein all the world rise up in arms against God, thou joinest with them: God spares me after sin, the greater is thy sin therefore that thou hast continued so long in, against a God so pitiful to thee: the dearest sins are now the vilest sins, because tho' they were most sweet to him, yet the spirit convinceth him they were therefore the more grievous unto the soul of God: you poor creatures may now hide, and colour, and excuse your sins before men, but when the Lord comes to convince you cannot lie hid; then your consciences (where Christ the Lord comes to convince) shall not be like the steward in the gospel that set down forty for every hundred pounds; no, the Lord will force it to bring in a true and clear account at that day.

2. There is a real light in spiritual conviction, rational conviction makes things appear notionally, but spiritual conviction, really: the spirit indeed useth argumentation in conviction, but it goeth further and causeth the Soul not only to see sin and death discursively, but also intuitively and really: reason can see and discourse about words and propositions; and behold things by report, and to deduct one thing from another, but the spirit makes a man see the things themselves, really wrapt up in those words: the spirit brings spiritual things as well as notions before a mans eye, the light of the spirit is like the light of the sun, it makes all things appear as they are, Job. 3. 20, 21. It was *Jerusalem's* misery, she heard the words of Christ, and they were not hid from them, but *the things of her peace* shut up in those words were *hid from her eyes*, (Luke 19. 41.) Discourse with many a man about his sin and misery, he will grant all that you say, and he is convinced that his estate is most wretched, and yet still lives in all manner of sin; what is the reason of it? truly he sees his sin only by discourse, but he doth not, nay cannot see the thing sin, death, wrath of God, until the spirit come; which only convinceth or sheweth that really. A man will not be afraid of a lion when it is painted only on a wall; why? because therein he doth not see the living lion; when he sees that he trembles. So men hear of sin, and talk of sin and death, and say they are most miserable in regard of both; yet their hearts trembles not, are not amazed at these evils, because sin is not seen alive, death is not presented alive before them, which is done by the spirit of conviction

conviction only, revealing these really to the soul : and hence it is that many men *in seeing see not*, (Isai. 6. 3.) how can that be ? thus, in seeing things notionally, they see them not really. And hence many that know most of sin, know least of sin, because in seeing it notionally, they see it not really. And therefore happy were it for some men, scholars and others, that they had no notional knowledge, for this *light* is their *darkness*, and makes them more uncapable of spiritual conviction. The first act of spiritual conviction is to let a man see clearly that he is sinful and most miserable ; the second act is to let the soul see really what this sin and death is. O consider of this ; many of you know that you are sinful, and that you shall die ; but dost thou know what sin is, and what it is to die ? If thou didst, I dare say thy heart would sink ; if thou dost not, thou art a condemned man, because not yet a convinced man. If you here ask, how the Lord makes sin real ; I answer, by making God real : the real greatness of sin is seen by beholding really the greatness of God who is smitten by sin ; sin is not seen because God is not seen. Joh. 3. 11. *He that doth evil hath not seen God.* No knowledge of God is the cause *why blood toucheth blood* (Hos. 4.4.) the spirit casts out all other company of vain and foolish thoughts, and then God comes in and appears immediately to the soul in his greatness and glory, and then the spirit faith, Lo, this is that God thy sins have provoked. And now sin appears as it is, and together with this real sight of sin, the soul doth not see painted fire, but sees the fire of God's wrath really, whether now it is lead-

ing, that can never be quench'd but by Christ's blood: and when the spirit hath thus convinced, now a man begins to see his madness and folly in times past, saying, I knew not what I did. And hence questions, Can the Lord pardon such a wretch as I, whose sins are so great? Hence also the heart begins to be affected with sin & death, because it sees them now as they are indeed, and not by report only. A man accounts it a matter of nothing to tread upon a worm, wherein there is nothing seen worthy either to be loved or feared; and hence a man's heart is not affected with it: before the spirit of conviction comes, God is more vile in man's eye than any worm; as Christ said of himself in another case, Psal. 22. *I am a worm and no man;* so may the Lord complain, *I am viler in such a one's eye than any worm, and no God:* and hence a man makes it a matter of nothing to tread upon the glorious majesty of God, and hence is not affected with it; but when God is seen by the spirit of conviction, in his great glory, then as he is great, sin is seen great; as his glory affects and astonisheth the soul, so sin affects the heart.

3. There is a constant light; the soul sees sin and death continually before it; *God's arrows stick fast* in the soul, and cannot be pluck'd out; *my sin is ever before me*, said David, (in his renewing the work of conversion.) For in effectual conviction the mind is not only bound to see the misery lying upon it, but it is held bound: it is such a sun light as never can be quenched, tho' it may be clouded. When the spirit of Christ darts in any light to see sin, the soul would turn away from looking

looking upon it, would not hear on that ear, *Felix-like*. But the spirit of conviction sent to make thorough work on the hearts of all the elect, follows them, meets them at every turn, forceth them to see and remember what they have done ; the least sin is now a moat in the eye, is ever troubling. Those ghastly, dreadful objects of sin, death, wrath, being presented by the spirit near unto the soul, fix the eye to fasten here ; they that can cast off at their pleasure the remembrance & thoughts of sin and death, never prove sound, until the Lord make them stay their thoughts, and muse deeply on what they have done, and whither they are going. And hence the soul in lying down, rising up, lyes down and rises up with perplexed thoughts, What will become of me ? The Lord sometimes keeps it waking in the night season, when others are asleep, and then 'tis haunted with those thoughts, it cannot sleep ; it looks back upon every day and week, sabbath, sermon, prayer, speeches, and thinks all this day, this week, &c. the goodness of the Lord and his patience to a wretch hath been continued ; I sin in all I do, in all my prayers, in all I think, the same heart remains still not humbled, not yet changed.

And hence you shall observe, that word that discovered sin first to it, it never goes out of the mind ; I think, saith the soul, I shall never forget such a man, nor such a truth. Hence also if the soul grow light and careless at some time, & casts off the thoughts of these things, the spirit returns again, and falls a reasoning with the soul, Why hast thou done this ? What hurt hath the Lord done thee ? Will there never be an end ? Hast

not thou gone on long enough in thy lewd course⁸ against God, but that thou shouldest still add unto the heap? Hast though not wrath enough upon thee already? How soon may the Lord stop thy breath? And then thou knowest thou hadst better never to have been born; Was there ever any that thus resisted grace; that thus adventured upon the sword point? Hast thou but one friend, a patient, long-suffering God, that hath left thy conscience without excuse long ago, and therefore could have cut thee off, and dost thou thus forsake him, thus abuse him? Thus the spirit follows; and hence the soul comes to some measure of confession of sin: O Lord, I have done exceeding wickedly, I have been worse than the horse that rusheth into the battle, because it sees not death before it, but I have seen death before me in these ways, and yet go on, and still sin, and cannot but sin: behold me, Lord, for I am very vile. When thus the spirit hath let into the soul a clear, real, constant light, to see sin and death, now there is a thorough conviction.

But you will say, In what measure doth the spirit communicate this light?

I shall therefore open the fourth particular, *viz.*

4. The measure of spiritual conviction in all the elect, *viz.* so much conviction of sin as may begin and work compunction for sin, so much sight of sin as may bring in sense of sin, so much is necessary and no more. Every one hath not the same measure of conviction, yet all the elect have and must have so much: for so much conviction is necessary as may attain the end of conviction. Now the *finis proximus*, or next end of conviction

conviction in the elect is compunction or sense of sin ; for what good can it do unto them to see sin, and not to be affected with it ? what greater mercy doth the Lord shew to the elect therein, than unto the devil's and reprobates who stand convinced, and know they are wicked and condemned, but yet their hearts altogether unaffected with any true remorse for sin ? *Mine eye, saith Jeremy, (Lam. 3. 51.) affecteth my heart. The Lord opens the ears of his to instruction, that he might humble, (Job 33. 16, 17.)* Some think that there is no thorough conviction, without some affection. I dare not say so, nor will I now dispute whether there is not something in the nature and essence of that conviction the elect have, different from that conviction in reprobates and devils ; 'tis sufficient now, and that which reacheth the end of this question, to know what measure of conviction is necessary. I conceive the clear discerning of it is by the immediate and sensible effect of it, *viz.* so much as affects the heart truly with sin.

But if you ask, What is that sense of sin, and what measure of this is necessary ? that I shall answer in the doctrine of compunction.

Let not therefore any soul be discouraged, and say, I was never yet convinced, because I have not felt such a clear, real, constant light to see sin and death as others have done : consider thou if the end of conviction be attained, which is a true sense and feeling of sin, thou hast then that measure which is most meet for thee, more than which the Lord regards not in any of his ; but you that walk up and down with convinced consciences, and know your states are miserable and sinful,

and that you perish if you die in that condition, and yet have no sense nor feeling, no sorrow nor affliction of spirit for those evils, I tell thee the very devils are in some respects nearer the kingdom of God than you be, who see, and feel, and tremble; wo, wo to thousands that live under convicting ministries, whom the word often hits, and the Lord by the spirit often meets, and they hear and know their sins are many, their estates bad, and that iniquity will be their ruin, if thus they continue; yet all God's light is without heat, and it is but the shining of it upon the rocks, and cold stones; they are frozen in their dregs: be it known to you, you have not one drop of that conviction which begins salvation. Before I pass from this to the second work of compunction, let me make a word of application.

Use 1. If the spirit begins thus with conviction of sin, then let all the ministers of Christ co-work with Christ, and begin with their people here; be faithful witnesses unto God's truth, and give warning to this secure world, that the sentence of death is past, and the curse of God lies upon every man for the least sin; *Lift up thy voice like a trumpet* was the Lord's word to *Isaiah*, Isa. 58. 1. *and tell them of their sin*: those bees we call drones that have lost their sting. When the salt of the earth (the ministers of Christ, Mat. 5.) have lost their acrimony and sharpness, or saltiness, *what is it good for but to be cast out?* Our hearts will putrify and corrupt by hearing such Doctrines only, as never search. When the Lord inflicted a grievous curse upon the people, *Ezek. 3. 26.* the Lord made *Ezekiel* dumb that he should not be a re-prover.

prover to them. What was the lamentation of Jeremy? *Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee, and have not discovered thine iniquity,* (Lam. 2. 14.) How would you have the Lord Jesus by his spirit to convince men? Must it not be by his word? Verily you keep the spirit of Christ from falling down upon the people, if you refuse to endeavour to convince the people by your word. Other doctrines are sweet and necessary; but this is in the first place most necessary. Beware of personating, beware of bitterness and passion, but Oh convince with a spirit of power and compassion; and he that shall be instrumental unto Christ in this or any other work for Christ's sake, unto him the Lord will be the principal agent, and by him will attain his own ends, finish his great work, gather in his scattered sheep, who are in great multitudes thro'out the kingdom scattered from him; if once they be throughly convinced that they are utterly lost, and gone out of the way.

Use 2. May not this also be sad reproof and terror to them that stand it out against all means of conviction, and will not see their sin, nor believe the fearful wrath of God due to them for sins; not a man scarce can be found, that will come to this conclusion, I am a sinful man and therefore I am a dead man, I am a condemned man: but like wild beasts fly from their pursuers into their holes, and thickets, and dens, their sinful extenuations, excuses, & apologys for sin, and for themselves, and if they be hunted thither, and found out there, then they resist and article against that truth which troubles them; they flatter themselves

in their own eyes, until their iniquities be found most hateful, (Psal. 36. 2) Many a man dislikes the text, the use, the long use wherein his sin is toucht, and his conscience toucht; especially if it be his darling sin, his *Herodias*, his *Rimmon*, especially, if withal he thinks the minister means him, he will not see it, nor confess it; especially, if he apprehends he shall lose his honour, or his *silver shrines* and profit by it: he will not see his sin, that he may not be troubled in conscience for his sin, that so he may not be forced to confess and forsake his sin, and condemn himself for it before God and men. O Lord, I mourn that I can scarce meet with a man that either cares to be, or will be convinced; but hath something always to say for himself, their sins are not so great, they are not so bad, but have some good, and therefore have some hope; and if God be merciful, it is no great matter tho' they be exceeding sinful, or some such thing; their mouths are not stopped to say nothing for themselves, but guilty. There is less conviction in the world in this age, than many are aware of. For I believe that all the powers of hell conspire together to blind men's eyes and daiken men's minds in this great work of Christ: *principiis obsta*, it is policy to stop Christ in his entrance, in this first stroke upon the soul; but Oh! little do you think what you do herein, and what wo you work to your selves thereby; dost thou stiffe and resist the first breathings of Christ's spirit, when he comes to save thee? what hurt will it be to know the worst of thy condition, now when there is hope hereby of coming out of it; who must else one day see all thy sins in order before.

before thee to thy eternal anguish and terror ? *Psal. 50. 21.* When the Lord shall say to thee as unto Dives, *Remember in thy life time how hadst thou good things,* remember such a time, such a place, such a sin ; which then you would not see : but now thou shalt see what it is to strike an infinite God. Remember thou wast forewarned of wrath to come, but thou would not believe thy self accursed, that so thou mightest have felt thy need of him that was made a curse to bless thee ; and therefore feel it now : Oh you will wish then that you had known this evil *in that your day.* What dost thou talk of grace ? thou thinkest thou hast grace, when as thou hast not the first beginning, nay, not the most remote preparation for it in this work of conviction ; what should we do for such as these, but with *Jeremy, Jer. 13. 17.* *If you will not hear, my soul shall weep in secret for your pride.*

Use 3. Oh be persuaded therefore to remember your sins past, and to consider of your ways now. All the prophaneness of thy heart, and life, all the vanity of thy youth, *Eccl. 11. 9.* all your secret sins, all your sins against light and love, checks and vows : thus God's people have done, *Ezek. 6. 9.* thus all the elect shall do ; Oh consider the Lord *remembers them all,* and that with grief of heart against thee, because thou forgettest them, *Hos. 2. 7.* He that numbers thy hairs, and tells the sparrows that fall, numbers much more thy sins that fall from thee, they are written down in his black book. They are no trifles, for he minds not toys ; the books must be opened, oh reckon now, you have yet time to call them to mind, which it may be shall not continue long ; it is the Lord's complaint

plaint, *Jer. 8. 6.* of a wicked generation, *that he could hear no man say, What have I done? Winnow your selves,* (as the word is, *Zeph. 2. 1.*) *O people not worthy to be beloved.* I pronounce unto you from the eternal God, that ere long the Lord will search out *Jerusalem* with candles, he will come with a sword in his hand to search for all secure sinners, in city and country, unless you awaken; he will make inquisition for blood, for oaths, for whoredoms, which grow common; for all secret sins we are frozen up in; Oh be willing, be but willing that the Lord should search you and convince you, now in this evening time of the day, before the night come, wherein it will be too late to say, *I wish I had considered of my ways in time;* of all sins, nohe can so hardly stand with uprightness, as a secret unwillingness to see and be convinced of sin, *Job. 3. 20, 21.* The helps & means for attaining hereunto are these,

1. *Help.* Bring thy soul to the light, desire the Lord in prayer as *Job* did, *What I see not, O Lord, shew me,* *Job 34. 32.* Set the glaies of God's law before thee, look up in the ministry of the word unto the Lord, and say, *O Lord search me:* the sun of this holy word discovers motes: on the sabbath day attend to all that which is spoken, as spaken unto thee, then examine thy self when thou hast leisure. When *David* saw (*Psal. 19.*) how pure the law was, he crys out, *Who knows his errors?*

2. *Help.* Look upon every conviction of thy conscience for sin, as an arrest and warning given from the Lord himself; for sometimes the word hits, and conscience startles, and faith, This is my

my sin, my condition ; yet how usual it is then for a man to put a merry face upon a foul conscience ? how oft do men think this is but the word of a man who hath a latitude given him of reprobating sin in the pulpit, and we must give way to them therein ? or else their hearts rise & swell against the man and word also ; and why is it thus ? because he thinks it is man only that speaks, whereas did he see and believe that this was a stroke, a warning, an arrest, a check from the omnipotent God, would he then grapple think you with him ? would it pass lightly by him then ? When *Eli* heard *Samuel* denounce sad things against his house, *It is the Lord*, said *Eli*, *1 Sam. 3. 18.* When *Paul* heard Jesus speaking, *Why persecutest thou me ?* *Acts 9.* he falls down astonished, and dares not kick against the pricks any longer. An arrest in the king's name comes with authority, and awes the heart of the man in debt.

3 *Help.* Do not judge of sin by any other rule, but as God judgeth of it, according to the rule of the word by which all men's ways shall be judged at the last day. What made *Saul*, *1 Sam. 15.* extenuate his sin to *Samuel* ? he judged not of it as the Lord in his word did ; for had he done so, he would have seen *disobedience* to a command as bad as *witchcraft*, as *Samuel* told him ; which also made his proud heart sink, and say, *I have sinned.* Remember for this end these scriptures, *Rom. 1. 18.* *Rom. 2. 9.* *Rom. 6. 23.* *Gal. 3. 10.* by which thou mayst see, either I must die, (in the state I am) or God himself must lie. Remember that an angry look or word is *murder* in God's account ; a manton eye, an unchast thought is *adultery* (*2 Cor. 5. 20*).

before a holy God ; before whose tribunal thou must give an account of every vain thought and word. And therefore do not judge of sin by the present pleasure, gain, honour, or ease in it ; for this a false rule : *Moses forsook the pleasures of sin for a season*, Heb. 11. 25. Nor yet by not feeling any punishment for it, for God reserves wrath, Nahum 1.2. till the day of reckoning : nor yet by the esteem that others generally have of it, who make no more of wounding the Son of God by sin, then they do of crushing vermin under their feet : Nor yet by the practise of others ; every man sins, and therefore I hope I shall do as well as others : Nor yet by seeing thy self better, and thanking God thou art not as other men ; it may be so, thou didst never steal, nor whore, nor murther as yet, but hast thou had any one vain thought in prayer ? Hast thou heard one sermon unprofitably ? hast thou sinned ? then know God spared not the angels that sinned, and how wilt thou escape, unless the Lord die for thee ? Nor yet, lastly, judge of it by thy own opinion of God, *in thinking God is like unto thee*, that as thou makest light of it, so he maketh less, *Psal. 50. 21.* Oh take heed of judging the evil of sin by any of these rules : Oh remember all men are apt to think of themselves better than they are ; *Are we also blind ?* say the Pharisees ; take heed that by judging of sin by these false rules, you deceive not your selves.

Use 4. Let this, lastly, be a use of thankfulness, to those whose eyes the Lord hath opened to see, and so convincing you of your sins. When *David* was going in the heat of his spirit to kill *Nabal*, and *Abigail* met him and stopt him, what said he ?

Oh blessed be the Lord for thy counsel ; (1 Sam. 25. 32, 33.) so when thou wert going on in the heat and pursuit of thy sin, toward eternal death, that the Lord should now meet thee in thy way, and convince thee of thy folly, and so stop thee, what a world of sin else wouldest thou have committed, how vile wouldest thou have been ? Oh say therefore, blessed be that minister of the Lord, and blessed for ever be the name of the Lord that gave me that counsel. It is said, (Joh. 16. 7.) Christ will send the comforter to convince of sin ; is it a comfortable thing to see sin ? yes, it shall one day be matter of unspeakable comfort to you that ever you saw sin ; that ever he shewed thee that mystery of iniquity in thy heart and life, those *arcana imperii*, those secrets of the power and dominion of sin over thee : *Thou shalt not hate, but reprove thy brother* (Levit. 19. 17.) If the Lord should secretly keep thy sin glowing in his own bosom against thee, and never reprove thee for it, nor convince thee of it ; no greater sign of God's everlasting hatred against thee. Oh it is infinite love that he hath called thee aside and dealt plainly & secretly with thee, and will you not be thankful for this ? The Lord might have left thee in thy brutish estate, and never made known thy latter end, never have told thee of thy sin or flood before it comes.

Object. It may be you will say, If I felt my sin, and were deeply humbled for it, I could then be thankful that ever I saw it ; what is it to see sin ?

Ans^w. This is a favour the Lord shews not to all mankind, many have no means to bring them

to the knowledge of it, and those that have, yet are smitten with a deep sleep under those means that they know not when death is at their doors, nor what sin means ; and this it may be is the condition of some of thy poor friends & acquaintance, that think it strange that thou runnest not with them in the same way as they do.

2. Suppose some reprobates do see sin, yet the Lord puts a secret virtue in that work of conviction upon thee, which makes thee cry to heaven for a spirit of brokenness for sin ; which without this sight of sin, thou wouldest never so much as have desired ; and this they have not.

3. However, conviction is a work of the spirit, though it should be but common ; and wilt not thou be thankful for common mercy, suppose it be outward ? how much more for this that is spiritual, though it should be common ? especially considering that it is the first fundamental work of the spirit, and is seminally all. Sense of sin begins here, and ariseth hence ; as ignorance of sin is seminally all sin : remember that the discovery of *Faux* in the vault, was the preservation of *England* : we use to remember the day and hour of the beginning of some great and notable deliverance ; Oh remember this time wherein the love of Christ first brake out in convincing thee of thy sin, who else hadst certainly perished in it. And thus much of this first work of conviction ; now the second follows, compunction.



S E C T. III.

The second act of Christ's power, in working compunction or sense of sin.

Compunction pricking at the heart, or sense and feeling of sin, is different from conviction of sin; the latter being the work of the understanding, and seated in that principally; the other is in the affections and will, and seated therein principally: a man may have sight of sin, without sorrow and sense of it; *Dan. 3. 22. James 1. 24. Rom. 2. 20, 21.* Yet that conviction which the spirit works in the elect is ever accompanied with compunction, first or last. For the better unfolding this point, let me open these four things to you.

1. That compunction or sense of sin immediately follows conviction of sin in the day of Christ's power.

2. The necessity of this work to succeed the other.

3. Wherein it consists.

4. The measure of it in all the elect.

1. That compunction follows conviction, is evident from scripture and reason, *Act. 2. 37. When they heard this, that is, when they saw and were convinced of their sin in crucifying the Lord of life, which they did not imagine to be a sin before, what follows next? it is said, They were pricked at the heart, &c., here is compunction. Ephraim also in turning unto God, Jer. 31. 19. hath these words, after that I was intrusted, I smote upon*

my thigh; (as men in great calamity befallen them use to do) I was ashamed, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. The men of Nineveh hearing by the prophet they were all to die within forty days, it is said, they believed God, (in the work of conviction) and then they fell to sack-cloth and ashes (in the work of compunction) which did immediately follow. *Josiah, 2 Chron. 34. 27.* in his renewed return unto God, after he heard the words of the law, *his heart melted, and he wept before the Lord.* For what is the end of conviction? is it not compunction? For if the Lord should let a man see his sin, and death for sin, and yet suffer the heart to remain hard and unaffected, the Lord did but leave him without excuse; *may, the Lord should but leave him under greater misery, and under a more fearful judgment, viz.* For a man to see and know his sin, and yet unaffected with it, and hardened under it, hardness of heart is one of the greatest judgments: to see sin and not to be affected with it, argues greater hardness. For it is no wonder if they that see not and know not sin, remain senseless of sin; alas! they know not what they do: but for a man to be enlightened, and see his sin, and yet unaffected; Lord, how great is this hardness, and how unexcusable will such a man be left before God, when the Lord shall reckon with him for his hardness of heart! What is the end of that light the Lord lets into the understanding in other things? is it not that thereby the heart might be affected thro'ly with it? Why doth the Lord let in the light of the knowledge of Christ & of his will? Is it that this knowledge should like froth float in the understanding,

derstanding, and be imprisoned there? No verily, but that the heart might be thoroughly and deeply affected therewith. And do you think the Lord will in the light of conviction imprison it up in the mind? is there not a further end that by this light the heart might be deeply affected with sin? if any say that the end of conviction is to drive the soul to Christ, I grant that this is the remote and last end of it, but the next end is compunction. For if the understanding be convinced of misery, and the heart remain hard, the mind may see indeed that righteousness and life only is to be had in Christ; yet the heart remaining hard, the will and affections will never stir toward Christ, its impossible a hard heart remaining such wholly unaffected with sin or misery, should be truly affected with Jesus Christ; but of this more hereafter.

2. What necessity is there of this compunction to succeed conviction?

Ans^w. I speak now of necessity in way of ordinary dispensation, not of God's usual and extraordinary way of working, where he useth neither law nor gospel (as ordinarily he doth) to work by. Many have been nibbling lately at this doctrine, and demanded, What need is there of sorrow and compunction of heart? A man may be converted only by the gospel, and God may let in sweetness and joy without any sense of sin or misery, and in my experience I have found it so; others godly and gracious also feel it so: why therefore do any press such a necessity of coming in at this back door unto Christ? This point I confess is very weighty, and much danger in denying

nying the truth of it ; yet withal, there needs much tenderness in handling of it, lest any stumble ; and therefore before I lay down the reasons to shew the necessity of it ; give me leave to propound these rules both for the clearing of the point, and answering sundry objections usually about this point.

1. *Rule.* In this work of compunction, do not think that the Lord hath not wrought any true sense of sin, because you find it not in such a measure as you imagine you should desire to have, and that others feel ; sense of sin admits degrees. I doubt not but *Joseph*'s brethren were humbled, yet *Joseph* must be more, he must be cast into the ditch, and into the prison, and *the iron must enter* not only into his legs, but into his *fall*, *Psal. 105.*

18. He must be more afflicted in spirit, because he was to do greater work for God, and was to be raised up higher than the rest, and therefore did need the more ballast : some are educated more civilly than others, and thereby have contracted less guilt and stoutness of heart against God and his ways, and therefore these have not such cause of trouble ; and being less rugged, have less need of axes to hew them : some men's sorrow breaks in upon them more suddenly, like storms and breaches of the sea, and the Lord is resolved to hasten and finish his work in them more speedily, and it may be more exemplarily ; (for every christian is not a fair copy) as in those, *Acts 2. 37.* In others their sorrows soak in by degrees, *Gutta cavat lapidem*, the Lord empties them by continual droppings, and hence feel not that measure of sorrow that others do : every christian

christian is not a *Heman*, *Psal. 88.* who suffers distracting fears and terrors from his youth up, ver. 15. who is afflicted with all God's ways, verse 7. for he was a man of exceeding high parts and gifts, as you may see, *1 Kings 4. 31.* And therefore the Lord had need of hanging some special plumets on his heart to keep it ever low, lest it should be lifted up above measure. Some sense of sin the Lord will work in all he saves, but not the same measure; the Lord gives not alway unto his, that which is good in it self, (its good I confess to be deeply affected and humbled) but that which is fit, and therefore best for thee.

2. *Rule.* Do not think there is no compunction or sense of sin wrought in the soul, because you cannot so clearly discern and feel it, nor the time of the working and first beginning of it. I have known many that have come with complaints, they were never humbled, they never felt it so, nor yet could tell the time when it was so, yet there hath been and many times they have seen it by the help of other spectacles, and blest God for it. When they in *Isai. 63. 17.* complained, *Lord, why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy fear:* do you think there was no softness; nor sensibleness indeed? Yes verily, but they felt nothing but a hard heart, nay, such hardness as if the Lord had plagued them with it by his own immediate hand, and not born and bred with them only, as with other men. Many a soul may think the Lord hath left it, nay, smitten it with a hard heart, and so make his moan of it, yet the Lord hath wrought real softness, under felt hardness, as many times in reprobates there is felt softness, when within

within there is real hardness. The stony-ground hearers were plowed and broken on the top, but were stony at the bottom. Some men may be wounded outwardly and mortally, this may easily be discerned. The Lord may wound others and they may bleed out; their sorrow is more inwardly and secretly, and therefore cannot point with their finger to their wound as others can.

3. Rule, Do not think the Lord works compunction in all the Elect in the same circumstantial work of the spirit, but only in the same substantial work: the Lord works a true sense of sin for substance and truth of it, yet there are many circumstantial works, like so many enlargements and comments upon one and the same Text. e.g. The same sin that affects *Paul*, it may be doth not affect *Lydia* or *Appollo*. The same notions for the aggravation of sin in one, do not come into the mind of the other; the same complaints, and prayers, and turnings of spirit in the one, may not be in the same circumstances, and with the like effects as in the other, and yet both of them feel sin, and therefore complain; they both feel sin, yet by means of various apprehensions and aggravations. This I speak, because you may the better understand the meaning of God's servants in opening the work of humiliation. You may hear them say, the soul doth this, and thinks that, and speaks another thing; it may be every one does not so think in the same individual circumstances, and therefore are to be understood as producing only *exemplum in res simili*; something like this or for the substance of this is there wrought.

4. *Rule.* In this work of compunction we must not bring rules unto men, but men to rules ; Crook not God's rules to the experience of men, (which is fallible, and many times corrupt) but bring men unto the rule, and try mens estates herein by that : For many will say, Some men are not humbled at all, never had any, precedent sorrow for sin. God's mercy only hath melted their hearts, and experience proves this, and many find this, who are sincere and gracious Christians.

I answer,

We are not in this or any other point to be guided by the experience of men only, but attend the rule ; if it be proved that according unto the rule men must be broken and affected with their sin and misery before mercy can be truly apprehended or Christ accepted ; What tell you me of such or such men ? let the rule stand ; but let men stand or fall according to the rule : many are accounted gracious and godly for a time, much affected with mercy and Christ Jesus ; yet afterward fall or wizen into nothing ; and prove very unsound.

What is the reason ?

Truly the cause was here, their first wound and sorrow for sin was not right, as hereafter shall be made good ; many thousands are miserably deceived about their estates, by this one thing, of crooking and wresting God's rules to Christians experience ; let all God's servants tremble and be wary here ; wrack not the holy Scriptures, nor force them to speak as thou seekest, but cry all things by them, *1 Thes. 5. 21.*

5. *Rule.*

5. Rule. Do not make the examples of converted persons in scripture patterns in all things of persons unconverted: do not make God's work upon the one, run parallel with God's work upon the other.

Some say, That many in Scripture are converted to Christ without any sorrow for sin, and produce the example of *Lydia*, whose heart God sweetly opened to receive Christ; and the Eunuch, *Act. 8.* converted in the same manner.

I answer,

These are examples of Persons converted to God before, who did believe in the Messiah, but did not know that this Jesus was the Messiah, which they soon did when the Lord sent the means to reveal Christ; and therefore *Lydia*, a Jewish Proselyte is called *a worshipper of God*, *Act. 16. 14.* and so was the Eunuch, *Act. 8. 27.* and in the same condition was the Centurion, *Act. 10. 2.* *who feared God, and whose prayers were accepted*, ver. 4. (which cannot be without faith) yet did not know that this Jesus crucifyed was the Messiah, until *Peter* came unto him. So that suppose here was no fence or sorrow for sin, at this time; doth it therefore follow they never had any when the Lord at first wrought upon them? are these examples in persons converted, fit to shew forth God's work in persons unconverted? In some things indeed they are examples, in others not so: their examples of believing in Christ are not in that act examples of sorrow for want of Christ. And yet, let me add, To say that God opened *Lydia's* heart to believe in Christ, and yet opened not her heart to lament her sin and misery

in her estate without Christ (suppose she were without Christ) is more then can be proved from the text; for it is said, *Her heart was opened to attend unto the things that were spoken by Paul*: And can any think that *Paul*, or an apostle, ever preached Christ without preaching the need men had of him? And could any preach their need of Christ without preaching mens undone and sinful estate without Christ? And do you think that *Lydia* was not made to attend unto this? Do you think that when *Philip* came to open the 53d of *Isai*. to the Eunuch, that *Christ was bruised for our iniquities*; that he did not let him understand the infinite evil of sin and misery of all sinners, and of him in special, unless the Lord *Jesus* was bruised for him.

6 Rule. In examples recorded in the scripture of God's converting grace, do not think they had no sorrow for sin, because it is not distinctly and expressly set down in all places: for the scripture usually sets down matters very briefly; it often-times supposeth many things, and refers us to judge of some by other places; as *Acts 6. 7.* it is said, *Many of the priests were obedient to the faith*; doth it therefore follow that they did immediately believe without any sense of sin? Look to a fuller example, *Acts 2.* and then we may see, as the one were converted to the faith, so were the other, having a hand in the same sin, *1 Tim. 1. 13, 14.* *Paul*, he was a persecutor, but the Lord received him to mercy, and that God's grace was abundant in faith and love: Doth it hence follow that *Paul* had no castings down, because not mentioned here? If we look upon *Acts 9*, we shall see it otherwise.

7 Rule. Do not judge of general and common workings of the spirit upon the souls of any to be the beginnings of effectual & special conversion ; for a man may have some inward and yet common knowledge of the gospel and Christ in it, before there be any sorrow for sin ; yet it doth not hence follow that the Lord begins not with compunction and sorrow, because common work is not special and effectual work ; when the spirit thus comes, he first begins here, as we shall prove.

8 Rule. The terrors, and fears, and sense of sin and death, be in themselves afflictions of soul, and of themselves drive from Christ ; yet in the hand of Christ, by the power of the spirit, they are made to lead, or rather drive unto Christ, which is able to turn mourning into joy, as well as after mourning to give joy ; and therefore 'tis a vain thing to think there is no need of such sorrows which drive from Christ ; and that Christ can work well enough therefore without them ; when as by the mighty power and riches of mercy in Christ, the Lord by wounding, nay, killing his of all their carnal security and self-confidence, saves all his alive, and drives them to seek for life in the Son.

These things being thus premised, let us now hear of the necessity of this work to succeed conviction.

Reas. i. Else a sinner will never part with his sin ; a bare conviction of sin doth but light the candle to see sin ; compunction burns his fingers, and that only makes him dread the fire, *Cleanse your hearts ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double minded men,* (saith the apostle James, chap. 4. verse

verse 8) But how should this be done? He answers, verse 9. *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, turn your laughter into mourning.* So *Joel 2. 12.* the prophet calls upon his hearers to turn from their *sin* unto the Lord; but how? *Rend your hearts, and not your garments.* Not that they were able to do this, but by what sorrow he requires of all in general; he thereby effectually works in the hearts of all the elect in particular; for every man naturally takes pleasure, nay all his delight & pleasure is in nothing else but sin; for God he hath none, but that. Now so long as he takes pleasure in sin, and finds contentment by sin, he cannot but cleave inseparably to it: *Oh 'tis sweet,* and it only is sweet; for so long the soul is dead in sin. *Pleasure in sin is death in sin,* *1 Tim. 5. 6.* So long as 'tis dead in sin, it is impossible it should part with sin; no more than a dead man can break the bonds of death. And therefore it undeniably follows, that the Lord must first put gall and wormwood to these dugs, before the soul will cease sucking, or be weaned from them; the Lord must first make sin bitter, before it will part with it; load it with sin, before it will set down and desire ease: And look as the pleasure in sin is exceeding sweet to a sinner, so the sorrow for it must be exceeding bitter, before the soul will part from it.

'Tis true, I confess, a man sometimes may part with sin without sorrow; the unclean spirit may go out for a time, before he is taken, bound and slain by the power of Christ. But such a kind of parting is but the washing of the cup, 'tis unsafe and unsound, and the end of such a christian will

be miserable ; for a man to hear of his sin, and then to say, I'll do no more so, without any sense or sorrow for it, would not have been approved by *Paul*, if he had seen no more in the careless *Corinthians*, (2 Cor. 7. 10.) in tolerating the incestuous person ; but their sorrow wrought this repentance. No, the Lord abhors such whorish wiping the lips ; and therefore the same apostle, (1 Cor. 5. 2.) when he reproves them for not separating the sinner, and so the sin from them, he sums it up in one word, *You have not mourned, that such a one might be taken from you* : because then sin is severed truly from the soul, when sorrow or shame, from sense and feeling of the evil of it, begins it. Not only sin is opposite to God, but when the Lord Jesus first comes near his elect in their sinful estate, they are then enemies themselves by sin unto God. And hence it is they will never part with their weapons, until themselves be thoroughly wounded : and therefore the Lord must wound their consciences, minds and hearts, before they will cast them by. Now if there be no parting with, no separation from sin, but sin is as strong, and the sinner as vile as ever before, hath Christ (who now comes to save his elect from sin) the end of his work ? What is the man the better for conviction, affection to Christ, name what you can, that remains still in his sins ? When the apostle would sum up all the misery of men, he doth it in those words, (1 Cor. 15. 17.) *Ye are yet in your sins* : So I say, thou art convicted, but art yet in thy sin ; art affected with Christ, and takest hold of Christ, but art yet in thy sin ; *He that confesseth and forfaketh his sin, shall find mercy.*

Obj.

Obj. You will say, May not the sweetness of Christ in the gospel, and sense of mercy, separate from sin, without any compunction?

I answer,

1. Sense of mercy & Christ's sweetness (I conceive) serve principally to draw the soul unto Christ, Jer. 31. 3. *With loving kindness have I drawn thee.* But compunction or sense of sin principally serves in the hand of Christ, to turn the soul from sin. Aversion from sin is distinct from, and in order goes before our conversion unto God.

2. Sense of the sweetness of God's grace in Christ keeps out sin, but it doth not thrust out sin at first.

3. Christ cannot be effectually sweet, unless sin be first made bitter; there may be some general notice of Christ's excellency, and some thirty pieces given for him; some esteem of his grace, and hope of his mercy, which may occasion sorrow; but I dare not say, that this is any sound or thorough work, till after sorrow, Ital. 50. 4. Christ hath the tongue of the learned given him to speak a word in season: Unto whom? it is added, Unto the weary. They are the men that will prize mercy, and they only to purpose; they that have felt the bitterness of sin and wrath, find it exceeding hard to prize Christ, and to taste his sweetness; how shall they do it indeed that find none at all? Sweetness before sense of sin, is like cordials before purging of a foul stomach: which usually strengthen the humour, but recover not the man.

Reas. 2. Because without this, no man will either care for Christ, or feel a need of Christ; a man may see a want of Christ by the power of

conviction, but he will never feel a need of Christ but by the spirit of compunction. *The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick.* A whole man may see his want of a physician, but a sick man only feels his need of him, will prize him, send for him. By *the whole* you are not to understand such as have no need indeed of Christ (for what sinner but hath need of him ?) but such as feel no need of him : as by *sick* cannot be meant such as are sinful and miserable, for then Christ should come actually to save all men ; but those that did feel themselves so, as a sick man that feels his sickness ; these only are the men that feel a need and necessity of Christ ; these only will come to Christ, and be glad of Christ, and be very thankful for their recovery of Christ. And hence ariseth the great sin of the world in despising the gospel, not at all affected with the glad tydings of it, because they are not affected with their sin and misery ; or if they be affected but in part with the gospel, it is because they are not thro'ly affected with their misery before.

And hence it is, that when the Lord called his people to him, yet they would *not come to him* (*Jer. 2. 31.*) because they were *Lords*, and well enough without him. Why did not they come to the supper, being invited ? it was because they had *farms* and *oxen* and *wives* to attend unto ; they felt no need of coming, as the *poor, lame, blind, and halt* did (*Luke 14.*) The prodigal cares not for father nor father's house, until he comes to see, *here I die.* (*Luke 15. 17.*) It is true, the grace of the gospel draws men unto Christ ; but it is very observable, that the gospel reveals no grace, but with

with respect and in reference unto sinners, and men in extream misery ; the gospel saith not that Christ is come to save ; but to save sinners, and to save his people from their sins. It reveals not this, that God justifies men, but he justifies the ungodly ; it reveals not this, (Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8.) that Christ died for us, but that he died for them that were weak, for sinners, for enemies. And if so, can any man imagine that this news will be sweet, unless men see and feel the infinite misery of sin, and the fruits of it ? will not men say or think, what great matter is there in that ? suppose we be sinners and enemies, yet we are well enough ; (Col. 3. 7.) before Christ comes a man's life lies in his sin. Now suppose any should proclaim to a company of men the great favour of their prince toward them, that he is such a gracious prince, as will take away all their lives ; will this be glad tidings ? gospel grace cannot be set out, much less felt, but in reference to sin and misery, (2 Cor. 5. 14.) which must be first felt, before it can be sweet.

Reas. 3. Because Christ will never come but only unto such as feel their misery ; for you will say, a man may come to Christ without it : I say again, if he doth (as he hath many followers) yet Christ will not come to him, nor commit himself to him ; (Mat. 9. 13.) *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance* ; in which place note, that as by the righteous is not meant such as are sincerely so, but such as think and find themselves so ; so by sinners, is not meant all manner of impenitent and hard-hearted sinners, but such as think and feel themselves such, and lament under it : now God the father sent him only unto such ; he

he is sent not to heal the hard-hearted, but *the broken-hearted*; (Luke 4. 18.) indeed he is sent to make men broken-hearted, who have hard hearts; but he is not sent to heal them until then; the Lord leaves the ninety nine that needs no repentance to wilder for ever; the one lost sheep, who feels itself so, and feels a need of a Saviour to come and find it out; who cannot come and find out him: the Lord Jesus will come unto, and unto him only, leaving all the ninety nine, Luke 15. 7.

Reas. 4. This may lastly appear, by considering the end of man's fall into sin, and the publishing of the Law to reveal sin; and of the Gospel also in reference unto sin and misery; why did the Lord suffer the fall of man? what was his great plot in it? it is apparent this, that thereby way might be made for the greater manifestation of God's grace in Christ. The Serpent poisons all mankind, that the seed of the woman might have the glory of recovering some: This was God's last end: The perdition of some (of themselves) - being but subordinate unto this, Rom. 9. 22, 23. Surely *Adam* might have glorified grace if he had stood, and God had revealed his grace in preserving him (made mutable) from falling. But the Lord saw grace should not be sufficiently advanced to its highest dignity by this, and therefore suffers him actually to fall, and that into an extreme depth of misery: Now consider man's fall in it self cannot be a meane of glorifying grace, but rather obscures all the glory of God; how shall the Lord attain his end then hereby? truly if the Lord let men see and feel their fall and misery

fery by it, now grace offered will be accepted and glorified. And therefore the Lord sends the Law to reveal sin, and make it exceeding sinful ; and death for sin, that this end might be attained, *Gal. 3. 22.* And therefore feeling of sin and death and misery being the means, must precede the other as the end ; and therefore as grace may be seen by conviction of misery, so the sweetnes of it only can be felt by feeling misery in this work of compunction.

But you will say, *What is this Compunction, and wherein doth it consist?*

This is the third particular to be opened ; in general it is, whereby the soul is affected with sin, and made sensible of sin ; but more particularly, *compunction* is nothing else but a pricking of the heart, or the wounding of the soul with such fear and sorrow for sin and misery, as severs the soul from sin, and from going on toward its eternal misery : So that it consists in three things ;

{ 1. Fear.
2. Sorrow.
3. Separation from sin.

The Lord Jesus when he comes to rescue his Elect ; look as Satan held them in their misery ; First by blinding their eyes from seeing of it ; Secondly, by hardning their hearts from feeling of it : So the Lord Jesus having cut asunder the first cord of Satan by conviction, breakes asunder the second by compunction, and causing the soul to feel and be affected with it's misery : and as the whole soul is unaffected before he comes, so he makes the whole soul sensible when he comes, and therefore he fills the conscience with fear and the heart

heart with sorrow and mourning, so as now the will of sin is broken, which was hardned before these fears and sorrows feized upon it. Let me open these particularly, that you may tast and try the truth of what now I deliver.

1. I say the Lord Christ in this work of compunction lets into the heart of a secure sinner a marvellous fear and terror of the direful displeasure of God, of death and hell, the punishment of sin; O beloved, look upon most men at this day, this is the great misery lying upon them, they do not fear the wrath to come, they fear not death nor damning, even then when they hear and know it is their Portion; but their hearts are set to sin, *Eccl. 8. 11.*

The Lord Christ therefore lets in this fear, that look as the Lord when he came to conquer the Canaanites, *Exod. 23 27, 28.* *He sent his hornets before him*, which were certain fears, which made their hearts faint in the day of battel, and by this subdued them; so the Lord Christ when he comes to conquer a poor sinner that hath long resisted him, and would go on to his own perdition, lets in these fears, that the soul shrinks in with the thoughts of its woful estate, and crys out secretly, Lord what will become of me, if I dye in this condition? *Paul* (*Acts 3. 6.*) trembles astonished at his misery and wickednes, and now he begins to cry out; the Jaylor was very cruel against *Paul* (*Acts 16.*) but when the Lord Jesus comes to rescue him from this condition, you shall see him trembling. The Lord had let in that fear, that now he is content to do any thing to be saved from the danger he saw he was now in; when a man

man sees danger and great danger near and imminent, now man naturally fears it : before Christ come, the soul may see its misery, but apprehends it far off, and hoping to escape it, and hence doth not fear it ; but when the Lord Jesus comes, he presents a man's danger, death, wrath, and eternity near unto him, and hence hath no hope to escape it, as now he is, and therefore doth fear ; and seeing the misery exceeding great, he hath an exceeding great (though oft-times deep) fear of it ; as men near death and apprehending it so, begin then to be troubled, and cry out when it is too late. The Lord Jesus deals more mercifully with the elect, and brings death and eternity near them before they draw near to it ; whiles it is called to day : The poor Taylor began to think of killing himself when fears were upon him, (Acts 16.) and so many under this stroke of Christ, have the same thoughts, because they see no hope ; but this measure is not in all, this work is in all. *Put them in fear, O Lord, that they may know they be but men, (Psal. 9. 20.)* before this fear comes, men are above God, and think they can stand it out against him ; the Lord therefore lets in this fear to make them know they be but men, and that as proud, and stout, and great as they are, yet that they are not above God, and that it is vain to kick against the pricks, and go on as they have done ; for if they do, he will not endure it long : *The spirit of bondage makes men fear, before the spirit of adoption comes, these fears therefore are such, as the regenerate after they have received the spirit of adoption never have ; and therefore they are such as pursue the soul with*

with some threatening of the word, pronouncing death and perdition to him in that estate : e. g. *He that believes not is condemned already*, thus the word speaks to conscience, *John 3. 17*. Thou believest not faith a man's own conscience, the spirit witnessing with it, therefore thou art condemned faith conscience ; now the spirit of bondage, is the testimony of God's spirit witnessing to both the premises and conclusion : now this spirit no regenerate man indeed ever hath after this time, but the fears he hath arise from another principle of corruption of conscience, and malice of satan through the present desertion of the spirit leaving him ; not from any positive witness of the spirit of any such untruth, which yet is truth, while the soul is under this stroke and not regenerate : mark therefore diligently that this fear is the work of the spirit of the Lord Jesus, and hence it follows,

1. That these fears are not merely natural (as those, *Rom. 2. 15.*) arising from natural conscience only, which only accuse of sin, but never affect ; but they are supernatural, they are arrows shot into the conscience by the arm of the spirit ; so dreadful that no word nor meditation of death and eternity can beget such fears, but creates them.

2. Hence it follows, that they are clear fears, (for the spirit's work is ever clear before he leaves it, *Eph. 5. 13.*) they are not blind confused fears, and suspicious and sad conjectures, whereby many a man is afraid and much afraid and affrighted like men in a dream, that think they are in hell, yet cannot tell what that evil is which they fear ;

fear; but they are clear fears whereby they distinctly know and see that they are miserable, and what that misery is.

3. Hence it follows that they are strong fears, because the almighty hand of the spirit sets them on, and shakes the soul; they are not weak fears which a man can shake off, or cure by weak hopes, sleep or business, &c. like some winds that shake the tree, but never blow it down: but these fears cast down the tallest cedar, and appall the heart, and cool the courage and boldness of the most impenitent and audacious sinner. The spirit presenting the greatest evil in eternal separation from God: hence no evil in this world is so dreadful as this, I had better never been born then to bear it (saith the soul) and hence casts off all other thoughts, and cannot be quiet; and hence it is that these fears force a man to flie and seek out for a better condition. A man like *Lot* lingers in his sin, but these fears like the angel drive him violently out, the Lord saying to him, Away for thy life, lest thou perish with the world, for thy sins are come up to heaven, thou mayst die before one day be at an end, and then what will become of thee? Ah thou sinful wretched man! may not the Lord justly do it? are not thy sins grown so great and many, that they are an intollerable burden for the soul of God to bear any longer? and hence you shall observe, if the soul after sad fears grows bold and careless again, the spirit pursues it with more cause of fear, and now the soul cries out, Did the Lord ever elect thee? Christ shed his blood to save his people from their sins, thou livest yet in thy sins, did he ever shed his blood

for thee? Thou had sinned against conscience, after thou hast been enlightned and fallen back again, hast thou not therefore committed the unpardonable sin? Thou hast had many a fair season of seeking God, but hast dallied and dream'd away thy time; is not the day of grace therefore now past? It is true, the Lord is yet patient and bountiful, and lets thee live on common mercy, but is not all this to aggravate thy condemnation against that great and terrible day of the Lord which is at hand? Are there not better men in hell then thou art that never committed the like sin? Thus the spirit pursues with strong fears, till proud man falls down to the dust before God. The soul is now under fears, not above them; and therefore cannot come out of these chains by the most comfortable doctrine it hears, nor particular application of it by the most merciful ministers in the world, until the Lord say, as Lam. 3. 57. *fear not*; the Lord only can asswage these strong winds, and raging waters, in which there is no other cry heard of this soul thus tossed with tempests, but, *Oh I perish!* Only the Lord making way for the spirit of adoption by these in his elect; drives them out to seek if there be any hope, and so they are not properly desperate fears, yet as I say, strong fears, not alike extensively, yet alike intensively strong in all; a small evil when tidings is brought of it doth not fear, but if the evil be apprehended great and near too, the very suspicion of it makes the heart tremble; when a house is on fire, or a mighty army entred the land and near the city, children that know not the greatness of the evil fear them not; but men

men that know the danger are full of fear. The wrath of the Lord that fire those armies of everlasting woes, are great evils, the blind world may not much fear them, but all the elect whose minds are convinced to see the greatness of them, cannot but fear, and that with strong and constant fears; nor is it cowardize, but duty to fear these *everlasting burnings*. And hence the soul in this case wonders at the security of the world, dreads the terrors of the Lord that are near them, and usually seeks to awaken all its poor friends. I once thought my self well, and was quiet as you be, but the Lord hath let me see my wo, which I cannot but fear; O look you to it.

Thus the Lord works this fear in some in a greater, in others in a lesser measure. O consider whether the Lord hath thus affected your hearts with fear; Oh secure times what will God do with us! many of you having heard the voice of the lion roaring, and yet you tremble not. The Lord hath foretold you of death and eternal wo for the least sin, do you believe it, and yet fear it not? how art thou then forsaken of God? Many of you that like old marriners can laugh at all foul weather, and like weather-cocks set your faces against all winds; and if you be damned at last you cannot help it, you must bear it as well as you can, you hope to do it as well as others shall do: Oh! how far are such from the kingdom of God, the Lord not yet working nor pricking thy heart so much as with fear?

2. Sorrow and mourning for sin is the second thing wherein compunction consists. And look as fear plucks the soul from security in seeing no

evil to come; so sorrow takes off the present pleasure and delight in sin, in a greater measure than fear doth. The Lord therefore having smitten the soul, or shot the arrows of fear into the soul; it therefore grows exceeding sad & heavy, thinking within it self, What good do wife or children, house or lands, peace and friends, health and rest, do me? in the mean time, condemned to die, and that eternally; it may be reprobated never to see God's face more: the guilt and power of sin in heart and life lying still upon me? And hereupon the soul mourns in the day, and in the night, desires to go alone and weep; and there confesseth its vileness before God, all the days of vanity, and sins of ignorance, thinking, Oh what have I done! and seeks for mercy, but not one smile, nothing but clouds of anger appear; and then thinks, if this anger, the fruit of my sin, be so great, Oh what are my sins, the cause hereof? When the angel had set out the sin of the Israelites in making a league with the Canaanites, (Judges 2. 1.) and told them that they should be *thorns in their sides*, they *sat down*, (ver. 4.) and *lift up their voice, and wept*: so 'tis with a contrite sinner. Note narrowly that eminent place of scripture, *Isai. 61. 3.* the Lord Christ is sent to *appoint beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness to them that mourn.* Out of which note these four things for the explication of this sorrow or mourning.

First, It is such a mourning as is precedent unto spiritual joy. And hence it is not said, I will give the spirit of gladness to beget mourning, (tho' the Lord doth so after conversion) but this goes

in order before that. *Ephraim* like, who seeing what an *unruly beast* he had been, *unaccustomed to God's yoke*, smites upon his thigh, and *bemoans* himself, (Jer. 31. 18.) It is God's method (after his people have sinned) to sad their hearts, and then to turn mourning into joy ; much more at first beginning of God's work upon the soul, they shall first mourn, and lament, and smite upon the thigh : if God wounds the soul for sin, it shall smart, and bleed too, before God will heal.

Secondly, It is a great mourning, because it is, called *a spirit of mourning*, Hos. 6. 1, 2. As *a spirit of slumber* is a deep slumber. When the poor Jews shall be converted, their great sin shall then be presented before them of cursing and crucifying the Lord of life ; as it was to those, *Acts* 2. 36. And by reason of this, there shall be *a great mourning*, Zech. 12. 11. that they shall desire to go alone in secret *every one apart*, and take their fill of mourning, before the Lord *open the Fountain of Grace*, Chap. 13. 1. It is not a Summer cloud, or an *April showre*, that is soon spent, but a great mourning. For,

1. Before this spirit of sorrow come, a man's heart takes great delight in his sin, 'tis his god, his life, and sweeter than Christ, and all the joys of heaven ; and therefore there must be great sorrow, sin must be made exceeding bitter. A man that is very hungry and thirsty after his lust, must find such meat and drink exceeding bitter, else he will feed on it. *Solomon* took great content in women, but what faith he when the Lord humbled him ? *I find a woman more bitter than death*, Ecc. 7. 26. Hear this you Harlots, and you that live

in your wanton lusts, the Lord will make your sweet morsels more bitter than death to you, if the Lord saves you.

2. Because the greatest evils are the objects of this sorrow, *viz.* Sin and death. It is true, a man may mourn for smaller evils sooner; but when the Spirit sets on the greatest evils, then they sad much more. *Mine iniquities are too heavy to bear;* Psal. 38. 1, 2. Why so? Many a man can bear them without sinking. True, but in the Elect the Spirit sets on, loads the soul herewith, *A wounded spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. Because the greatest evils lye upon the most tender part of a tender soul pressed down by the omnipotent hand of Christ's Spirit: For now the multitude of sins more than *the hairs on the head,* (Psal. 32. 2, 3. and 40. 12.) come now to mind; as also the long continuance in them, cradle sins. No sooner, saith the soul, did I begin to live, but I began to sin. Obstinacy also in them lyes very heavy; I have had warnings, checks, resolutions against them, and yet have gone on. (Jer. 31. 19.) The power of sin also sadds it; that it is said, Prov. 21. 9. *When the wicked reign, the people mourn;* so doth the soul when it feels sin reign. I cannot subdue it, nay the Lord will not, that I fear, the Lord hath left me over to it. The encrease of sin it feels, makes it mourn also (Dan. 9. 12.) I grow worse and worse, saith the soul; the leak comes in faster than he can cast it out. The greatness of sin makes it mourn: Was there ever such a sinner as I? And lastly, the sense of condemnation for sin lyes upon him; this is the fruit of your evil ways, saith the spirit, Jer. 3. 14. The soul doth

not let sin pass by it now as water down the mill, but being stop'd by conviction and fear of the evil of it, it swels high, and fills the heart full of grief and sorrow, that many times it is overwhelmed therewith.

3. Because Christ will not be very sweet, unless this mourning under misery be very great; the healing of a cut finger is sweet, but of a mortal wound is exceeding sweet; a little sorrow will make Christ sweet, but great sorrow under sense of deadly wounds is exceeding sweet; and without this Christ hath not his honour due to him, if he be not only sweet, but also exceeding sweet and precious.

4. Because it is such a sorrow, as nothing but that that hath wounded the soul can heal it. Let men have the greatest outward troubles, outward things can cure them; or else they will wear away. As if a man be sick, or in debt, physick and money can cure these; but this wound, neither can, or ever shall be healed but by the hand that wounded it, *Hos. 6. 1, 2, 3.* And hence a man can take no comfort in meat, drink, sleep, friends, mirth, nor pastime, while this wound, this sorrow lasts; for if any thing else can heal it, it is not the right wound or sorrow the Lord breeds in his Elect. An adulterous heart indeed may be quieted with other lovers; *Cain* can build away his sorrow: Nay, I'll say more, this wounded soul cannot comfort it self by any promises, till the Lord come: *David* had a promise of pardon from *Nathan*, yet he cries out to the Lord to make him hear the voice of joy and gladness, that his broken bones might rejoice, *Psal. 51. 8.* Did not the Lord make

make him hear the voice of joy by *Nathan*? Yes, outwardly ; but the Lord that had broke his bones, must make him hear inwardly. Nay, when the Lord comes himself to comfort, much adoe the Lord hath to make him hear it ; as the Israelites that hearkened not unto Moses voice because of their hard bondage, that unless the Lord did invincibly comfort, it would lie bleeding to death, and never live. It must needs therefore be great sorrow, which all the world, men nor Angels can remove.

5. You may be confirmed in this, if lastly you consider the many ways the Lord takes to beget great mourning, if the soul will not be sorrowful : as, sometimes great afflictions ; *Manasseh* must be taken in the bushes, and be cast into chains, (2 Chron. 33. 11, 12.) Sometimes strange temptations, hellish blasphemies, Is there a God ? are the scriptures his word ? Why should the Lord be so cruel as to reprobate any of his creatures, to torment it so long, &c. ? Sometimes long eclipsing of the light of God's countenance ; no prayers answered, but daily bills of indictment. And sometimes it thinks it hears and feels a secret testimony from God, that he never had thought of peace toward it, and that his purpose is immutable. Sometimes it questions, Can God forgive sins so great ? Can it stand with his honour to put up so much wrong ? Sometimes it feels its heart so extream hard & dedolent, that it thinks the Lord hath sealed it up under this plague till the judgment of the great day. And sometimes the Lord makes melancholy a good servant to him to further this work of sorrow. But thus the Lord

Lord rebukes many a hard-hearted sinner, that will not bear the yoke, nor feel the load ; and now the Lord turns the beauty of the proudest into ashes, and withers the glory of all flesh. Nay, sometimes you shall observe the Lord though he comes not out as a *Lion* to rend, yet as a *Mark* he frets out by secret pinings and languishings, the senseless security of man, that he shall mourn to purpose before he leave him. I do not mean by this, as if all men had the like measure of sorrow ; but a great sorrow it is in all. Every child is delivered by some throws ; those that stick long in the birth may feel them longer & very many.

Nor yet do I press a necessity of tears, or violent and tumultuous complaints ; the deepest sorrows run with least noise. If a man can have tears for outward losses, and none for sins, 'tis very suspicidus whether he was ever truly sorrowful for sin ; otherwise ; as the greatest joys are not always exprest in laughter, so the greatest sorrows are not always express'd in shedding of tears ; what the measure of this great sorrow is, we shall hear hereafter.

Thirdly, It is a constant mourning, for so it is here called, *a spirit of heaviness* ; as that woman that had a spirit of infirmity, and was bowed down many years : *Hannah* constantly troubled, is called, *a woman of a sorrowful spirit*, 1 Sam. 1. 12, 15. As the spirit of pride and whoredom, Hos. 4. 12. is a constant frame, where tho' the acts be sometime suspended, yet the spirit remains ; so a spirit of mourning, is such sorrow, as though the acts of mourning be sometime hindred, yet the spirit and spring remains ; hypocrites will mourn under sin and

and misery, but what is it? it is *the hanging down the head like a bull-rush*, *Isai. 58. 5.* in bad weather for a day. Oh how many have pangs and gripes of sorrow, and can quickly ease themselves again! these mourners come to nothing in the conclusion: I grant the sorrow and sadness of spirit may be interrupted, but it returns again, and never leaves the soul until the Lord look down from heaven, *Lam. 3. 48, 49, 50.* The cause continues, guilt and strength of sin, and therefore this effect continues.

Fourthly, It is such a sorrow as makes way for gladness, for so it is here said, *the Lord gives beauty for these ashes*, and hence it is no desperate hellish sorrow; but usually mixt with sense of some mercy, at least common, and some hope; not that which apprehends the object of hope particularly (which is done in vocation) but that the Lord may find out some way of saving it, *Jonah 3. 9.* *Acts 2. 37.* which hope with sense of mercy waiting so long, preserving from hell and death so oft, &c. doth not harden the heart, (as in reprobates) but serve to break the more, and to load it with greater sorrow; thus the Lord works this sorrow in all his Elect. I know it is in a greater measure, and from some other grounds after the soul is in Christ; but this sorrow there is for substance, mentioned for the reasons given; if Christ hate you, you shall mourn, but never till it be too late; if he love you, you must mourn now; how great and many are many of your sins, how near is your doom? the Lord only knows how fearful your condemnation will be, you have oft heard; but yet how few of your hearts are sad and very heavy

heavy for these things? sin is your pleasure, not your sorrow; you fly from sorrow as from a temptation of Satan who comes to trouble you, and to lead you to despair: *David's eyes ran down with rivers of waters, because others brake God's Law,* and *Jeremy wish'd he had a cottage in the wilderness to mourn in,* and yet you do not, you cannot pour out one drop, nor yet wish you had hearts to lament your own sins: but oh know it, that when the Lord Christ comes, he will sad thy soul, when he comes to search thy old sores by the spirit of conviction, he will make them smart and bleed abundantly, by the spirit of compunction.

3. Separation from sin is the third thing wherein compunction consists, such a fear and sorrow for sin under a sinful estate, as separates the soul from sin, is true compunction; without which the Lord Christ cannot be had: the soul is cut and wounded with sin by fear and sorrow, but it is cut off by this stroak of the Spirit, not from the being, but from the growing power of sin; from the will to sin, not from all sin in the will which is mortified by a Spirit of holiness, after the soul is emplanted into Christ; for compunction, contrition, brokenness of heart for sin (call it what you will) is opposite to hardness of heart which is in every sinner while Christ leaves him; now in hardness (as in a stone) there is, First, Insensibleness. Secondly, A close cleaving of all the parts together, whereby it comes to pass that hard things make resistance of what is cast against them: so in compunction there is not only sensibleness of the evil of sin and death, by fear and sorrow, but such as makes a separation of that close

close union between sin and the soul : and hence it is that the Lord abhors all fastings, humiliations, prayers, tears, unless they be of this stamp, and are accompanied with this effect. The Lord flings the dung of their *fastings and sorrows* (Isai. 58. 5.) in their faces, because they did not *break the bands of wickedness* ; to mourn for sin and misery, and yet to be in thy sin, is the work of justice on the damned in hell, and all the devils at this day, that are pincht with their black chains not loosened from them ; and not the work of the grace of Christ in the day of his power. *He that confesseth his sins shall have mercy* ; that is true, but remember the meaning of that confession in the next words, *and forsaketh*, he shall find mercy, (Prov. 28. 13.) What is the end of the mother in laying wormwood and gall upon her breast, but that the child by tasting the bitterness of it might be weaned and have his stomach and will turned from it ? What is the end of fear and sorrow, but by this to turn away the soul from sin ? This point is weighty and full of difficulty, of great use, and worthy of deep meditation, (Job 33. 15, 16, 17.) For as the first wound and stroke of the spirit is, so it is in all after-works of it, both of faith and holiness in the soul, if this be right, faith is right, holiness is right ; if this be imperfect, or naught, all is according to it afterward : the greatest difficulty lies here, to know what measure of separation from sin the spirit makes here ; for after we are in Christ, then sin is mortified ; how then is there any separation of the heart from it, before it doth fully believe ; or what measure is there necessary ? here therefore I shall answer to the fourth and last particular, *viz.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, *What is the measure of compunction the Lord works in all the elect?*

Answ. So much compunction or sense of sin is necessary as attains the end of it: now what is the end of it? No other but that the soul being humbled might go to Christ (by faith) to take away his sin; the *finis proximus* or next end of compunction is humiliation, that the soul may be severed from sin, as to renounce it self for it; the *finis remotus*, or last end is, that being thus humbled, it might go unto Christ to take away sin: for beloved, the condemnation of the world lies not so much in being sinful under guilt & power of sin as in being unwilling the Lord Jesus should take it away: this I say is the greatest hindrance of salvation, Joh. 3. 19. and 5. 40. O Jerusalem wilt thou not be made clean? Jer. 13. 27. that was their great evil, they were not only polluted, but they would not be made clean: the Lord Jesus therefore rolls away this stone from the sepulcher, beats down this mountain; and because it must first believe in Christ before it can receive Grace from Christ, it must come to Christ to take away sin, before the Lord will do it; hence so much loosening from sin as makes the soul thus to come, is necessary. So much fear and sorrow as loosens from sin, and so much loosening from sin as makes the soul willing, or at least not unwilling that the Lord Jesus should take it away, is necessary: for who ever comes to Christ, or is not unwilling Christ should come to him to take away all his sin, hath (whatever he thinks) some antecedent loosening and separation from sin.

Oh faith a poor sinner, when the Lord hath struck his heart, and he feels guilt, and terror, and mighty strength of corruption, if the Lord Jesus would take away these evils from me, though I cannot, means cannot, that will be exceeding rich mercy. The Lord doth not wound the heart to this end, that the soul should first heal it self, before it come to the physician, but that it might seek out, or feeling its need, be willing and desirous of a physician, the Lord Jesus, to come and heal it. It is the great fault of many christians, either their wounds and sorrows are so little, they desire not to be healed ; or if they do, they labour to heal themselves first, before they come to the physician for it ; they will first make themselves holy, and put on their jewels, and then believe in Christ. And hence are those many complaints, What have I to do with Christ ? Why should he have to do with me that have such unholy, vile, hard, blind, and most wicked heart ? If I were more humbled, and more holy, then I would go to him, and think he would come to me. O for the Lord's sake dishonour not the grace of Christ. It is true, thou canst not come to Christ, till thou art loaden, and humbled, and separated from thy sin. Thou canst not be ingrafted into this olive, unless thou be cut, and cut off too from the old root. Yet remember for ever, that no more sorrow for sin, no more separation from sin is necessary to thy closing with Christ, than so much as makes thee willing, or rather not unwilling that the Lord should take it away. And know it, if thou seekest for a greater measure of humiliation antecedent to thy closing with

with Christ than this, thou shewest the more pride therein, who wilt rather go into thy self to make thy self holy and humble, that thou mightest be worthy of Christ, then go out of thy self, unto the Lord Jesus, to take thy sin away. In a word, who thinkest Christ cannot love thee, until thou makest thy self fair, and when thou thinkest thy self so (which is pride) wilt then think otherwise of Christ. The Lord therefore when he teacheth his people how to return unto him after grievous sins, directs them to this course, not to go about the bush to remove their iniquities themselves, or to stay and live securely in their sins, until the Lord did it himself; but bids them come to him and say, *Take away (Lord) all iniquities* Hos. 14. 1, 2, 3. You shall see Ephraim beweeping himself, Jer. 31. 18. But how? Doth he say he feels his sins now all removed? No, but he desires the Lord to turn him, and then (faith he) *I shall be turned.*

As if he should say, Lord, I shall never turn from this stubborn vile heart, nor so much as turn to thee, to take it away, unless thou dost turn to me, and then I shall be turned to purpose. What saith the penitent church? *Come, say they, let us go unto the Lord*, Hos. 6. 1. They might object and say, Alas, the Lord is our enemy, and wounds us, and hath broken us to pieces, we are not yet healed but lie dead as well as wounded; shall such dead spirits live? Mark what follows, True indeed, *He hath wounded us*, let us therefore go to him, that he may heal us, and *after two days he will revive us*. The Lord requires no more of us than thus to come to him. Indeed after a christian

is in Christ, labour for more and more sense of sin, that may drive you nearer and nearer unto Christ. Yet know before you come to him, the Lord requires no more than this ; & as he requires no more than this, so 'tis his own spirit (not our abilities) that must also work this : and thus much he will work, and doth require of all whom he purposeth to save. If thou wilt not come to Christ to take away thy sins, thou shalt undoubtedly perish in them. If the Lord work that sorrow, so as to be willing the Lord should take them away, thou shalt be undoubtedly saved from them.

If you would know what measure of willingness to have Christ take away sin is required ; you shall hear when we come to open the fourth particular in the doctrine of faith.

If you further ask, How the spirit works this loosening from sin in the work of compunction ?

I answer, the spirit of Christ works this by a double act,

- { 1. Moral.
- 2. Physical.

As in the conversion of the soul by faith unto God, the spirit is not only a moral agent persuading, but also a supernatural agent physically working the heart to believe, by a divine and immediate act ; so in the aversion of the soul from sin, the spirit doth affect the heart with fear and sorrow morally, but this can never take away sin, as we see in *Judas* and *Cain* deeply affected and afflicted in spirit, & yet in their sin. And therefore the spirit puts forth his own hand physically or immediately, and his own arm brings salvation to us, by a further secret immediate stroke, turning

turning the iron neck, cutting the iron sinews of sin, and so makes this disunion or separation. You think it is easy to be willing that Christ should come and take away all your sins; I tell you the omnipotent arm of the Lord that instructed *Jeremy* (Jer. 8. 11.) in a smaller matter, can only instruct you here; both these acts ever go together according to the measure mentioned; the latter cannot be without the first, the first is in vain without the latter.

Quest. *But what evil in sin doth the spirit morally affect the heart with, and so physically turn it from sin?*

Ans. He affects the soul with it as the greatest evil; by *sin* I mean not as considered without death. (for at this time the soul is not so spiritual, as that sin without consideration of death and wrath due to it should affect it) but *sin & death*, *sin armed with wrath*, *sin working death*, pricks the heart as the greatest evil, and so lets out that core at the bottom, as may fit the soul for healing.

For,

1. If the spirit make a man feel sin truly, the soul feels it as it is; it is not the name, and talk of the danger of sin that troubles it, but the spirit (ever making things real) loads the soul with it indeed, and as it is; now it is the greatest evil and therefore so it feels sin. Believe it, you never felt sin indeed as it is, if you have not felt it thus.

2. Else no man will prize Christ as the greatest good; without which no man shall have him, *Mat. 10. 37.*

3. Else a man will live and continue in sin. If sin had been a greater evil to *Pilate* than the loss

of Cæsar's friendship, he would never have crucified Christ. If sin had been a greater evil to *Jesus* than the loss of his kingdom, he had never kept up the two calves. If sin were a greater evil than poverty, shame, grief in this world, many a professor would never lose Christ and a good conscience too, for a little gain, profit or honour. Beloved, the great curse and wrath of the Lord upon all men in the world almost is this, that the greatest evils should be the least of all felt; and the smallest evils most of all complained of. What is death that only separates thy soul from thy body, to sin that separates God blessed for ever from thy soul? (Acts 3. 16.) And therefore the Lord Jesus will remove this curse from whom he saves.

Quest. But you will say, *What is that evil the soul sees at this time, that thus affects the heart with it, as the greatest evil?* This is the last difficulty here.

Ans. There is a threefold evil especially seen in sin:

1. The evil of torment and anguish.
2. The evil of wrong and injury to God.
3. The evil of separation of the soul from God.

The first may affect reprobates, as *Saul* and *Judas*, who were sore distressed when they felt the anguish of conscience by sin.

The second is only in those who are actually justified, called and sanctified, who lament sin as it is against God, and a God reconciled to them, and as it is against the life of God begun in them; and hence they cry out of it as *a body of death*.

The

The third, the elect feel at this first stroke and wound which the spirit gives them ; the anguish of sin indeed lies sore upon them, but *this much more*. *Christ is come to seek that which is lost*, Luke 15. 7. The sheep is lost, when, First, it is separated and gone from the owner ; Secondly, when it knows not how to return again, unless the shepherd find it and carry it home : so that soul is properly and truly lost, that feels it self separated and gone from God, knowing not how to return to him again, unless the Lord come and take it upon his shoulders, and carry it in his arms : this lies heavy upon it, *viz.* that it is gone from God, and wholly separated from all union to him, and communion with him. You may observe, John 16. 9. that *the spirit convinces of sin* ; how ? because they believe not in me. i.e. Because they shall see and feel themselves quite separated from me ; they shall hear of my glory and riches of mercy, and that happiness which all that have me, shall and do enjoy ; but they shall mourn that they have no part nor portion in these things ; they shall mourn that they live without me, and that they have lived so long without me.

I confess many other considerations of the evil of sin now come in, but this is the main channel where all the other rivulets empty themselves. And hence it is that the soul under this stroke is in a state of seeking only, yet finds nothing ; it seeks God and Christ, and therefore feels a want, a loss of both by sin ; for the end of all the fears, terrors, sorrows, &c. upon the elect, is to bring them back again to God, and into fellowship with God, the only blessedness of man. Now if the soul

Soul ordained and made for this end should not feel its present separation from God by sin, and the bitterness of the evil of it, it would never seek to return again to him as to his greatest good, nor desire ever to come into his bosom again; for look as sin wounds the soul, so the soul seeks for healing of it; if only the torment of sin wound, ease of conscience from that anguish will heal it: so if separation from God wound the heart, only union and communion with God will heal it, and comfort it again. The Lord Christ therefore having laid his hand upon the soul to bring it back to himself first, and so to the Father, being designed to gather in all the outcasts of *Israel*, those he ever makes to feel themselves out-casts, as cast away out of God's blessed sight and presence, that so they may desire at last to come home again: reprobates, not made for this end, have not this sense of sin, the means of their return. And hence it is that the souls of those God saves, are never quiet until they come to God, and have communion with him; but they mourn for their distance from him, and the hiding of his face, until the Lord shine forth again: whereas every one else though much troubled, yet sits down contented with any little odd thing that serves to quiet them for the time, before the Lord return to them, or they enter into their rest, in that ineffable communion with him.

Let me now make application of this, before I proceed to open the next particular of humiliation.

Use 1. This may shew us the great mistake of two sorts:

1. Such

1. Such as think there is no necessity of any sense of misery before the application of the remedy or their closing with Christ ; because say they, where there is sense there is life : (all sense and feeling arising from life) and where there is life, there is Christ already. And hence it is that they would not have the law first preached in those days, but the gospel ; the other is to go round about the bush.

I answer, that for my own part this doctrine (of seeing & feeling our misery before the remedy) is so universally received by all solid divines both at home and abroad, that I meet with ; and the contrary opinion so cross to the holy scriptures, and general experience of the saints, and the preaching of the other so abundantly sealed to be God's own way by his rich blessings on the labours of others of his servants faithful to him herein ; that were it not for the sake of some weak and mis-led, I should not dare to question it ; the Lord himself so expressly speaking, that *he came not to call the righteous, but on the contrary only to heal the sick*, who know and feel their sickness chiefly by *the law*, Rom. 3. 20. Dost thou think therefore, that there is spiritual life where ever there is any sense ? Then I say, the devils and damned in hell have much spiritual life, for they feel their misery with a witness.

As for the preaching of the gospel before the law to shew our misery ; it is true, that the gospel is to be looked at, as the main end ; yet you must use the means, before you can come to the end, by the preaching of the law, or misery in despising the gospel, end and means have been ever

ever good friends, and you may join them well together, you cannot sever them without danger. I do observe that the apostles ever used this method : *Paul first proves Jews and Gentiles to be under sin*, in almost the three first chapters of the *Romans*, before he opens the doctrine of justification by *faith in Christ*. I do not observe that ever there was so clear and manifest opening of man's misery, as by Christ and his apostles, who brought in the clearest revelations of the remedy. I do not read in *Moses*, or in all the prophets, such full and plain expressions of our misery as in the new testament : *The worm that never dies* ; *the fire that never goes out* ; *the wrath to come*, &c. and therefore assuredly they thought this no back-door, but faith the door to Christ, and this the way to faith. To say that a man must first have Christ and life, before he feel any spiritual misery, is to say that a christian must first be healed, that he may be sick ; cured, that he may be wounded ; receive the spirit of adoption, before he receive ; and that he may receive the spirit of bondage to fear again.

If Ministers shall preach the remedy before they shew misery, wo to this age, that shall be deprived of those blessings, which the former gloried in, & blessed the Lord for. Mark those men that deny the use of the law to lead unto Christ, if they do not fall in time to oppose some main point of the gospel. For it is a righteous thing, but a heavy plague, for the Lord to suffer such men to obscure the gospel, that in their judgments zealously dislike this use of the Law. You must preach the remedy ; that is true : but you must also.

also first preach the wo and misery of men, or rather so mix them together, as the hearts of hearers may be deeply affected with both ; but first with their misery. It argues a great consumption of the spirit of grace, when christians lives are preserved only by alchermys & choice cordials, notions about Christ, nay choice ones too, or else the old and ordinary food of the country will not down. I tell you, the main wound of christians is want of deep humiliations and castings down ; and if you believe it not now, it may be, pestilence, sword, and famine shall teach you this doctrine, when the Lord shall make these things wound you to the very heart, and put you to your very wits end, that were not, that would not in season be wounded at the heart with sin.

Are we troubled with too many wounded consciences in these times, that we are so solicitous of coining new principles of peace ? what is every man by nature, but a kind of an infinite evil ? all the sins that fill earth and hell, are in every one man's heart, for sin in man is endless ; and canst not thou endure to be cast down ? Nothing is so vile as Christ to a man not humbled, and can you so easily prize him, and taste him, without any casting down ?

2. Such as think there is a necessity of sense of Misery by the work of the law, before Christ can be received ; but they think there is no such feeling of misery, as hath been mentioned ; but that it is common to the reprobate as to the elect, and consequently, that in sense of sin there is no such special work of the spirit as separates the soul from sin before it comes unto Christ, but that this

is done after the soul is in Christ by faith, *viz.* in
Sanctification being first justified by faith.

This is the judgment of many holy and learned; and therefore so long as there is no disagreement in the substance of this doctrine, it should not trouble us; only let it be considered, whether what is said, is not the truth of Christ; and if it be, let us not cast it aside. The Jewish Rabbins have a speech at this day very frequent in their writings, *Non est in lege unica literula aqua non magni suspensi sunt montes*: It is much more true of every truth; and if I much mistake not, much depends upon the right understanding of this point.

That therefore,

1. There must be some sense of misery, before the application of the remedy.

2. That this compunction or sense of misery is wrought by the spirit of Christ, not the power of man to prepare himself thereby for further grace.

3. That these terrors and sorrows in the elect do virtually differ from those in the reprobate, the one driving the soul to Christ, the other not; these are agreed on all hands. The question only is, Whether there is this farther stroak of severing the soul from sin, conjoined with the terrors and sorrows in the elect before their closing with Christ, which is not in the reprobate? or in the word, whether there is not a special work of the spirit turning (at least in order of nature) the soul from sin, before the soul returns by faith unto Christ.

For the affirmative I leave several considerations.

1. Conf. That

1. *Cons.* That there is *gracia actualis*, or actual grace, as well as *habitualis*, or habitual grace, learned Ferrius makes a vast difference between them; and therefore to think that there can be no power of sin removed but by habitual or sanctifying grace, is unsound; for actual grace may do it, the spirit may take away sin immediately by habitual grace, and yet it can do it immediately also by an omnipotent act, by that which is called actual actuating or moving grace; Christ can and must first bind the strong man, and cast him out by this working or actual grace, before he dwells in the house of man's heart, by habitual and sanctifying grace. The gardeners knife may immediately cut off a cyen from a tree, thereby taking away all its power to grow there any more, before it hath a power to bring forth any fruit, which is wrought only by implanting it into another stock: New creation (which is at first conversion) may well be without habitual graces that are but creatures.

2 *Cons.* Whether any man since the fall is a subject immediately capable of sanctifying or habitual grace; or whether any unregenerate man is in a next disposition to receive such grace; as the air is immediately of light, out of which the darkness is expelled by light, and so the habits of grace do expel the habits & power of sin (say some) I suppose the affirmative is most false, and in near affinity with some gross points of Arminianism. Adam, in his pure naturals, and considered merely as a living soul, was such a subject; like a white paper, fitted immediately to take the impression of

God's image ; but since, by his fall, sin is fallen like a mighty blot upon the soul, whereby a man not only wants grace, as the dark air doth light, but also *resists grace*, Joh. 14. 17. Hence this resistance must be first taken away, before the Lord introduce his image again. To say that a man can of himself dispose himself unto grace, was Pelagianism in Aquinas his time : yet some disposition is necessary, saith *Ferrius* ; not unto actual grace, or that which wrought upon a man, *per modum actus*, (as he saith) but unto the reception of habitual or sanctifying grace, it being in the soul *per modum formæ*, no form being introduced but into *materiam dispositam*. i. e. matter fitted or prepared, or into such a vessel which is immediately capable of it.

There is in man a double resistance against grace.

1. Of a holy frame of grace, by original corruption, which is opposite to original and renewed holiness, or to this holy frame.

2. Of the God of grace himself when he comes to work it, Job 21. 14. Ezek. 24. 13.

The first is taken away in that which we call the spirit of sanctification, after faith ; the second is taken away not only in the act of it, (as by terrors it may be in reprobates, *Psal. 66. 2.*) but in some measure in the inward root and disposition of it, (only in the elect) there being (as hath been said) no more separation from sin, at this time required, then so much as may make the soul come to the Lord to take it away, or at least not unwilling, nor resisting the Lord, when he comes to do it himself.

3. *Ques.* Whether doth not the work of union unto Christ, go before our communion with Christ? I suppose 'tis undeniable, that union must be before communion; and that union to Christ is a work of grace as peculiar to the elect, as communion with him.

Now justification and sanctification are two parts of our communion with him, and follow our union, *Rom. 8. 1.* Our union therefore must be before these, of which there are two parts, or rather two things on our part, necessarily required to it:

1. Cutting off from the wild olive tree, the old *Adam*. 2. Implanting into the good olive tree, the second *Adam*. The first must go before the second; for where there is perfect resistance, there can be no perfect union. But take a man growing upon his own root of nature, there is nothing but perfect resistance; *Rom. 8. 7.* And therefore that resistance must first be taken away, before the Lord draw the soul to Christ, and by faith implant it into Christ. In a word, I see not how a man can wholly resist God and Christ, and yet be united unto him at the same instant; and therefore the one (in order of nature at least) goes before the other: and therefore let any man living prove his union to Christ, and to his lust also if he can. You will believe in Christ, many of you, and yet you will have your whores, and cups, and lusts, and world too, and oppose all the means that would have you from these also. I tell you, you shall find one day how miserably deceived you have been herein. *You cannot serve God and Mammon, How can ye believe,* saith Christ,

Joh. 5. 44. that seek honour one of another ? If you can have Christ, and be ambitious too, take Him ; but how can you believe till the Lord hath broken you off from thence.

4. Ques. Whether vocation (as peculiar to the elect as sanctification) doth not go before justification and glorification, Rom. 8. 38. Whether also there are not two things in effectual vocation :

1. Is not Christ, that good, the term to which the soul is firstly called ?

2. Is not sin and world, that evil, the term from which the soul is called ? I suppose 'tis evident, that the soul is effectually called, and therefore actually and firstly turned from darkness to light, from the power of satan unto God. First from darkness, then unto light ; first from the power of satan, then unto God ; as is evident by the apostles own words, Act. 26. 18. where he methodically sets down the wonderful works of Christ's grace by his ministry : the first is *to turn them from darkness to light, and from satan's power unto God*, which are the two parts of vocation, *that they may receive forgiveness of sins in justification, (vocation being a means to this end)* that they may receive *an inheritance in glorification among such as being justified are sanctified also by faith in his name*. The apostle doth not say, that he was *to return men to light and unto God, and so turn them from darkness and from the power of satan*, (though this is true in some sense) but he was first *to turn from darkness and satan, and so to return them unto light, and God in Christ*. For how is it possible to be turned unto Christ, and yet then also to be turned to sin and satan ? Doth

it not imply a contradiction, to be turned toward sin (which is ever from Christ), and yet to be turned toward Christ together ? All divines affirm generally, that in the working of faith, the Lord makes the soul *willing* to have Christ, *Psal. 110.* 2, 3. but withal they affirm, that of unwilling he makes willing, and therefore it follows, that the Lord must first remove that unwillingness, before it can be willing, it being impossible to be both willing and unwilling together.

5. *Conf.* Whether the cause of all that counterfeit coin and hypocrisy in this professing age, doth not arise from this root, *viz.* not having this wound at first, but only some trouble for sin without separation from it, sore throws without deliverance from sin ? is not this the death of most, if not all wicked men living ? how many are there that clasp about Christ, and yet prove enemies to the cross of Christ ; fall from Christ scandalously or secretly afterward ? What is the reason of it ? Certainly, if the Lord had cut them off from their sin, they had never fallen to everlasting bondage in sin again ; but there the spirit of God forsook them, the Lord not owning so much love to them. Consider seriously why the stony and thorny-ground hearers, *Mat. 13.* came to nothing in their growth of seeming faith and sanctification ; was the fault in the seed ? No verily, but only in the ground ; the one was broken, but not deep enough, the other was broken deep, but not through enough, the roots of thorns choaked them, the lusts and cares of the world were not destroyed first, and therefore they destroyed that ground.

I conclude therefore with that of *Jeremy*, *Jer. 4. 3, 4.* *Break up your fallow ground, seek to the Lord to break them for you, and sow not among thorns, take heed of such brokenness which removes not the thorns of sinful secret stubbornness, lest the wrath of the Lord break out against you, and burn that none can quench it.* Do not cut off *John baptist's* head, you that can be content to hear him gladly, and do many things, but he must not touch your *Herodias*, and make a divorce there, but suffer him to come in the spirit and power of *Elijah*, nay of *Christ Jesus*, to beat down your mountains, fill up your vallies, make your crooked rough ways smooth, that you see the glory of the Lord Jesus, without which he shall be ever hid from you. Cry you faithful servants of the Lord, that *All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man, of sin, of world, is a withering flower*; that the Lord Jesus may be revealed ever fresh, and sweet, and precious in the eyes of the saints.

The evidence of this truth is the general, put blessed and learned *Pemble* upon another way; for when he perceived (as himself confesseth) that it is the general doctrine of all orthodox divines, *viz.* that actual faith is never wrought in the soul, till beside the supernatural illumination of the mind, the will be also first freed in part from its natural perverseness, (God making all men of unwilling, willing) hereupon he concludes that this is done by the spirit of sanctification, and one supernatural quality of holiness universally infused in all the powers of the soul at once; so that the spirit instantly first sanctifies us, and puts life in us; then it acts in sorrow for,

for, and detestation of sin, and so we come actually to believe. And because he forelaw the blow, *viz.* that in this way, christians are sanctified before they be justified ; he answers, yes, we are justified declaratively after this.

Others (who follow him) answer more roundly, *viz.* that we are sanctified before we are really and actually justified, and herein differ from him.

Now when it is objected against this, *viz.* that our vocation is that which goes before our justification, sanctification being a part of glorification following after, *Rom. 8. 30.* Hereupon some others (treading in his steps) affirm, that vocation is the same with sanctification, and not comprehended under glorification.

Others perceiving the evil of this error, *viz.* to place sanctification before justification, good fruits before a good tree, they do therefore deny any saving work, whether of vocation or sanctification, before justification. And hence on the other extream, they do place a christian's justification, before his faith in vocation, or holiness in his sanctification : so that by this last opinion a christian is not justified by faith, (which was *Paul's* phrase) but rather (as he said wittily and wisely) *faithed by his justification.* Before I come to clear the truth in these spiritual mysteries ; let this only be remembred, *viz.* That sanctification, which *Pemble* calls our spiritual life, may be taken two ways :

{ 1. Largely.
2. Strictly.

1. Largely, for any awakenings of conscience, or acts of the spirit of life, and so 'tis true, we are

are quickned by these acts, and so in a large sense sanctified first.

2. Strictly, for those habits of the life of holiness which are opposite to the body of death in us; and that we are not first sanctified before we are justified in this sense, we shall manifest by and by. Only let me begin to shew the error of the last opinion first, *viz.* That a christian is not first justified before faith, or vocation, may appear thus :

1. It is professedly cross to the whole current of Scripture, which saith, *We are justified by faith*, and therefore not before faith ; and to say that the meaning of such phrases is, that we are justified declaratively by faith, or to our sense and feeling *in foro conscientiae*, is a meer device ; for our justification is opposed to the state of unrighteousness and condemnation going before, which condemnation is not only declarative and in the court of conscience, but real, and in the court of heaven : for so saith the scripture expressly, Joh. 3. 18. *He that believeth not, is condemned already* : and ver. 36. *The wrath of God abideth on him* : and Gal. 3. 22. *The scripture (which is the sentence in God's court) hath concluded all under sin*. Hence a second argument ariseth.

2. If a man be justified before faith, then an actual unbeliever is subject to no condemnation ; but this is expressly cross to the letter of the text, *He that believeth not, is condemned already*, Joh. 3. 18. and the wrath of God doth lie upon him. The subjects of non-condemnation are those that be in Christ, by faith, Rom. 8. 1. not out of Christ by unbelief. Rom. 11. 20. there is indeed a merited justification by

by Christ's death, and a virtual or exemplary justification in Christ's resurrection, as in our head and surety; and both these were before not only our faith, but our very being; but to say that we are therefore actually justified before faith, because our justification was merited before we had faith, gives us a just ground of affirming that we are actually sanctified while we are in the state of nature unsanctified, *Ephes. 2. 1.* because our sanctification was merited by Christ before we had any being in him.

We must indeed be first made good trees by faith in Christ's righteousness, before we can bring forth any good fruits of holiness. *John 15. 3,4,5.* God makes us not good trees without being in Christ by faith, no more than we are bad trees in contracting *Adam's* guilt without our being first in him; God gives us first his Son (offered in the gospel, and received by faith) and then gives us all other things with him; he doth not justify us without giving us his Son; but having first given him, gives us this also.

2. That sanctification, doth not go before justification, may appear thus:

1. If guilt of *Adam's* sin go before original pollution, *Rom. 5. 12.* then imputation of Christ's righteousness before renewed sanctification.

2. To place sanctification before justification, is quite cross to the apostles practice, (which is our pattern) who first sought to be found in Christ, *Phil. 3. 9.* (in the work of union) not having his own righteousness in the work of justification (which in order follows that) that he may then know him in the power of his death and resurrection in sanctification

cation (here comes in sanctification) if by any means he might attain to the resurrection of the dead in glorification, (the last of all.)

3. This is quite cross to the apostles doctrine which makes justification the cause of sanctification, and therefore must needs go before it, Rom. 5. as sin goes before spiritual and eternal death, so righteousness goes before spiritual life in sanctification, and eternal life in glory : the Lord holds forth Christ in the gospel first as our propitiation, Rom. 3.24. and then in comes dying to sin, and living to God in sanctification, chap. 6 1. Holiness is the end of our actual reconciliation, Col. 1. 21, 22.

4. If sanctification go before justification by faith, then a christian's communion with Christ, goes before his union to him by faith ; but our union is the foundation of communion, and it is impossible there should be communion without some precedent union. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Christ is made righteousness and sanctification ; unto whom ? read the beginning of the verse and then you shall see, it is only to those that be in Christ, which is by faith.

Let none say here (as some do) that we have union to Christ, first by the spirit, without faith, in order going before faith : For understanding of which, let us a little consider of our union unto Christ ; our union to Christ is not by the essential presence of the spirit, for that is in every man, as the Godhead is every where, in whom we live and move. This is common to the most wicked man, nay to the vilest creature in the world. Hence it follows that our union

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is by some act of the spirit peculiar to the elect (who only shall have communion with Christ) working some real change in the soul, (for of real, not relative union I now speak) this act cannot be those first acts of the spirit of bondage, (for they are common unto reprobates) they are therefore such acts as are essential unto the nature of union. Now look as dis-union, is the disjunction or separation of divers things one from another ; so union is the conjunction or joining of them together, that were before severed. Hence that act of the spirit in uniting us to Christ, can be nothing else but the bringing back the soul unto Christ, or the conjunction of the soul unto Christ, and into Christ, by bringing it back to him, that before this lay like a dry bone in the valley separated from him. Thus, 1 Cor. 6. 17. *He that is joined, or (as the word signifies) gleyed to the Lord, is one spirit with him.* The spirit therefore brings us to the Lord Christ, and so we are in him. Now *the coming of the soul to Christ*, what is it but *faith*? Job. 6. 35. Our union therefore is by faith, not without it : for by it only we that were once separated from him by sin, and especially by *unbelief*, Heb. 3. 12. are now come not only unto him, as iron unto the load-stone, John 6. 37. but (which is most near) into him, as branches into the vine, and so grow one with him ; and hence those phrases in scripture, *to believe in Christ, or into Christ*, I speak not this as if we were united to Christ without the spirit on his part ; (for the conjunction of things several must be mutual, if it be firm) I only shew that we are not united before faith by the spirit unto Christ ;

Christ ; but that we are by faith (wrought by the spirit) whereby on our part we are first conjoined unto him : and then on his part he by the person of the spirit is most wonderfully united unto us. The spirit puts forth variety of acts in the soul ; as it acts us to good works, 'tis the spirit of obedience ; as it infuseth habits of grace, so 'tis the spirit of sanctification ; as it assists us continually, and guides us to our end, and witnesseth favour, 'tis the spirit of adoption ; as it works fears of death and hell, 'tis the spirit of bondage ; but as it draws us from sin to Christ, so 'tis the spirit of union ; and therefore to imagine union before and without faith by the spirit, is but a spirit indeed, which when you come to feel it, you shall find it a nothing, without flesh, or bones, or sinews. As our marriage union to Christ must have consent of faith on our part, wrought by the spirit, or else the Lord Jesus is a vain tutor to us ; so now the spirit on Christ's part must apprehend our faith ; and dwell in us, who otherwise shall suddenly go a whoring from him : *1 Pet. 1. 5. Eph. 3. 17.*

3. That vocation is not all one with sanctification, may appear thus :

1. Vocation is before justification, *Rom. 8. 30.* But sanctification is not before justification, as we have proved, and therefore they are not the same.

2. Sanctification is the end of vocation, *1 Thes. 4. 7.* Therefore it is not the same with it.

3. Faith is the principal thing in vocation : the first part of it being God's call, the second part being our answer to that call, or in coming at that call ; *Jer. 3. 22.* Now faith is no part of

of sanctification strictly taken, because it is the means & instrument of our justification & sanctification, *Acts 26. 18.* Our hearts are said to be purified by faith; *Acts 15. 9.* not our lives only in the acts of holiness and purity, but our hearts in the habitual frame of them. *Gal. 2. 20.* *I live by the faith of the Son of God,* saith Paul, *We pass from death to life,* *John 5. 24.* therefore it is no part of our spiritual life; *You will not come to me (which is faith) that you may have life;* *John 5. 40.* and *6. 50, 51.* therefore faith is the instrumental means of life, and therefore no part of our life: as faith comes by hearing, and therefore hearing is no part of faith; so justification comes by faith, and therefore is no part of sanctification: all our life both of justification and sanctification is laid up in Christ our head; this life according to God's great plot shall never be had but coming to Christ for it, *Heb. 7. 25.* else grace and Christ should not be so much honoured, *Rom. 4. 16.* *It is of faith, that it might be of grace;* sanctification therefore is the grace applied by faith; faith the grace applying; by coming to Christ for it, we have it; and therefore have it not, when first we come.

I am sorry to be thus large in less practical matters; yet I have thought it not unuseful, but very comfortable to a poor passenger, not only to know his journey's end, and the way in general to it, but also the several *Stadia* or Towns he is orderly to pass through; there is much wisdom of God to be seen not only in his work, but in his manner and order of working; for want of which, I see many christians in these days fall very foully into erroneous apprehensions in their

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judgments, the immediate ground of many errors in practice ; the objections made against what hath been delivered, are for the principal of them answered ; the main end, (my beloved) of propounding these things is, that you would look narrowly to your union, Oh take heed you miss not there : if you close with Christ, believe in Christ, & yet not cut off from your sin, *viz.* that spirit of resistance of Christ, you are utterly and eternally undone. *This is the condemnation of the world*, not that men love darkness wholly, and hate light, but *that they love darkness more than light* ; not that the unclean spirit is not gone out, but that he is not so cast out, as *never to return again* ; the wound of all men, yea, the best of men that profess Christ, and yet indeed out of Christ, lies in this : they were never severed from their sin by all their prayers, tears, fears, sorrows ; and hence they never truly come to Christ ; and hence perish in their sin.

Trouble me no more therefore in asking whether a christian is in a state of happiness or misery in this condition ? I answer, he is preparatively happy, he is now passing from death to life, though not as yet wholly passed : nor yet, whether there is any saving work before union ? I answer, No ; for what is said, is one necessary ingredient to the working up of our union, as cutting off the branch from the old stock, is necessary to the ingrafting it into the new ; indeed, *without faith it is impossible to please God* ; nor do I say that this work doth please : *i.e.* it doth not pacify God, (or that is proper to Christ's perfect righteousness received by faith) yet as it is a work of

of his own spirit upon us, it is pleasing to him ; (as the after work of sanctification is) though it neither doth pacify him ; nor do I see how this doctrine is any way opposite to the free offer of grace, and Christ, because it requires no more separation from sin, than that which drives them unto Christ ; nay, which is less, that makes them (by the power of the spirit) not resist, but yield to Christ ; that he may come unto them and draw them : you cannot repent nor convert yourselves ; *Be converted therefore, saith Peter, Acts 3.19.* that you may receive remission of sins ; and in this offer the spirit works ; and verily he that can truly receive Christ without that sense of misery as separates him from his sin, (as explained to you) let him believe notwithstanding all that which is said ; and the God of heaven speak peace to him ; his faith shall not trouble me, if he be sure it shall not one day deceive himself.

Use 2. Of lamentation for the hardness of mens hearts in these times : as it is said the Lord Jesus mourned when he saw the hardness of the peoples hearts, Mark 3. 5. Are there not some so far from this, as that they take pleasure in their sins, they are sugar under their tongues, as sweet as sleep, nay, as their lives ? and you come to pull away their limbs when you come to pluck away their sins : though they have broke sabbaths, neglected prayer, despised the word, hated and mocked at the saints, been stubborn to their parents, curs'd and swore, (which made Peter go out and weep bitterly) though lustful and wanton, (which broke David's bones) though guilty of more sins than there be motes in the sun or stars in heaven, tho'

their sins be crimson, and fill heaven with their cry, and all the earth with their burthen, yet they mourn not; never did it one hour together; nay, they cannot do it, because they will not; if you are weary & loaden, where are your unutterable groans, if wounded & bruised, where are your dolorous complaints? if sick, where is your enquiry for a physician? if sad, where are your tears, in the day, in the night, morning and evening alone by yourselves, and in company with others? Oh how great is the wrath of God, hardning so many thousands at this day! whence comes it that Christ is not prized, but from this senselessness? name any reason, why the blessed gospel of peace, and all the sweet promises of life are undervalued, but from hence: and what do you hereby poor creatures, but only aggravate your sins, and make those that are little, exceeding great in the eyes of God? whence is it that you *treasure up wrath against the day of wrath*, Rom. 2. 2, 3, 4, 5. This hardness is that which blunts the edge of God's ordinances, whence God's poor Ministers sit sorrowful in their closets, seeing all God's seed lost upon bare rocks; Oh this is the condition of many a man, and which is most fearful, the means which should make the heart sensible, make it more proud and unsensible. Tyre and Sydon, and Sodom, are more fit to mourn, than Chorazin and Capernaum that have enjoyed humbling means long. Nay, how many be there that mourn out their mournings, confess out their confessions, and by their own humiliations grow more senseless afterward? Did we ever live in a more impudent secure age? we shall seldom meet with one broken

broken with sin, but how few are broken from sin also? And hence it is many a tall cedar that were set down in the table-book for converted men, once much humbled, and now comforted ; stay but a few years, you shall see more dangerous sins of a second growth ; one turns drunkard, another covetous, another proud, another a sectary, another a very dry leaf, a very formalist ; another full of humorous opinions, another laden with scandalous lusts : wo to you that lament not now ; for you shall mourn. Dost thou think that Christ shall ever wipe off thy tears that sheddest none at all ? Dost thou think to reap in joy, that sowest not with these showers ? verily God will make his word good, Prov. 29. 1. *He that hardens his own heart, shall perish suddenly ;* hear this you secure sorrowless sinners, if ever God's hand be stretcht out suddenly against thee, in blasting thy estate, snatching away thy children, the wife of thy bosom, the husband of thy delight ; in staining thy name, vexing thee with debts and crosses, sharp and sore, or lingring sicknesses ; know that all these come upon thee for a hard heart : but Oh mourn for it now you parents, children, servants, the tokens of death are upon you ; desire the Lord to break your hearts for you : lie under God's hammer, be not above the work, and suffer the Lord to take away that which grieves him most, even thy stony heart, because it grieves thee least : mediate much of thy woful condition, chew the bitter pill ; remember death and rotting in the grave, that many are now in hell for thy sins, that Christ must die, or thou die for the least sin ; remember how patient and

Long-suffering the Lord hath been to thee, and how long he hath groaned under thy burthen, that it may be, though he would, yet he cannot bear the load long : let these things be mused on, that thy heart may be at last sorrowful before it be too late. But Oh the sad estate of many with us, that can mourn for an evil, except it be for the greatest sin & death, and wrath that lie upon them.

Use 3, Of exhortation : Labour for this sense of misery, for this spirit of compunction : how can you believe in Christ, that feel not your misery without him ? a broken Christ cannot do thee good without a broken heart ; be afflicted and mourn ye sinners, turn your laughter into mourning, tremble to think of that wrath, which burns down to the bottom of hell, and under which the eternal Son of God sweat drops of blood : great sins which thou knowest thou art guilty of, cause great guilt, and great hardness of heart, and therefore are seldom forgiven or subdued without great affliction of spirit ; they have loaded the Lord long, they must load thee. Little sins are usually slighted, and extenuated, and therefore the Lord accounts them great ; and therefore thy soul must be in bitterness for them, before the Lord will pass them by : it is not every trouble that will serve the turn ; look that it be such as separates thy soul from thy sin, or else it will separate between thy soul and God. I know it is not in your power to break your own hearts, no more than to make the rocks to bleed, yet remember he that bids thee cast up and prepare the way of the Lord, he hath promised that every mountain shall be brought low, and the crooked ways made plain,

plain, and the rough smooth, and the vallies filled : He only can do it for thee, and will do it for some, it may be for thee ; he that broke the heart of *Manasseh* and *Paul* after their blood and blasphemies, when they never desired any such thing, he can break thine much more when thou art desiring him to do it for thee ; here are many of you that fear you were never humbled nor burthened enough ; I say fear it still, fear lest there be a stone in the bottom, not so as to discourage and drive thy heart from Christ, but so as to feel a greater need [of his grace to soften thy heart ; and to take thy senselessness away : the Lord doth purposely command thee *to plough up the fallow ground*, that thou mightest feel thy impotency so to do, and come to him to take it away : every thing will harden thee more and more, until the Lord come and take thy stony heart away by his own hand : all God's kindness will make thee more bold to sin, and all God's judgments more fierce and obstinate in sin, unless the Lord put to his hand ; if *Pharaoh's* heart be softened for a time, it will grow hard again, if the Lord take it not away : the means therefore for thee to get this compunction is, 1. To feel the evil of thy hard heart ; no surer token of reprobation than hardness, if continued in ; especially for thy heart to grow hard under or after softening means, as it was in *Pharaoh*. 2. To look up to the Lord in all ordinances, that he would take it away.

— *Use* 4. Have you not great cause of abundant thankfulness, into whose hearts the Lord hath let in fears and sorrows, concerning your estates ?

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the blind world looks upon all troubles of conscience as temptations of the devil to despair, and the very way to run mad ; but to consider what the Lord hath done for you that have such : what if the Lord hath left you *without all feeling*, as those in *Eph. 4. 19.* what if the Lord had smitten you with *a spirit of slumber*, as those, *Rom. 11. 8.* would not your estate have been then lamentable ? and have you no hearts to acknowledge his unspeakable goodness in awakening of you, in shaking the very foundations ? dost thou think that any ever had such a hard heart as thou hast ? dost not say so in secret before the Lord sometimes ? Oh then what rich grace is this to give thee any sense and feeling of thy sin and danger by it, though it be never so little in thine eyes ! some think these terrors are a judgment ; it is true, if they were merely imaginary, or worldly and desperate ; but saith the apostle, *2 Cor. 7. 7. I thank God I made you sorry.* Suppose thy sorrow should be only in regard of the punishment of sin, yet this is the Lord's goodness to make thy heart so far sensible ; that once didst go like a beast to the slaughter, fearing no danger at all ; the very means to prize favour from God, is to feel wrath, (as well as sin) and the very reason why the Lord hath let thee feel thy punishment heavy, is, that thy soul might feel the evil of sin, by considering that if the fruits be so bitter, what is then the cause ? *Jer. 30. 15.* be not therefore weary of thy burthen, so as to think the Lord powers out his vengeance on thee while thy trouble remains ; Oh consider that this is the hand of the Lord Jesus, and that he

he is now about to save thee, when he comes to work any compunction in thee ; especially such, as whereby he doth not only cut thy heart with fears and sorrows, but cut thee off from thy sin ; so far only as humbles thee and drives thee to the Lord Christ to take them away. And so I come to the third particular of humiliation.



S E C T. IV.

The third Act of Christ's Power, which is Humiliation.

THE Lord Jesus having thus broken the heart by compunction, is not like a foolish builder that leaves off his work before he hath fully finished it, and therefore having thus wounded a poor sinner he goes on to humble him also ; for though in a large sense a wounded contrite sinner is an humble sinner, yet strictly taken there is a great difference between them ; and therefore he is said to dwell with the contrite and humble, Isai. 57. 16. i. e. not only with those that be wounded with sin, but humbled for sin ; although it is certain the soul is seldom or never effectually wounded, but it is also humbled at the same time. A man may be wounded sore even unto death, and yet the pride of the man is such that he will not fall down before him that smites him : so it is with many a poor sinner, the Lord hath sorely wounded him that he will

will resist no more, yet he will rather flee to his duties to heal him, or die alone and sink under his discouragements, then stop. O beloved, man must down before the Lord Christ will take him up: and therefore in Isai. 40. 5, 6, 7. *The glory of the Lord is promised to be revealed: but what means must be used for this end?* Cry saith the Lord: *what shall I cry?* saith he; the Lord answers, that *all flesh is grass*, and that *the glory of it fades*, and that *the people are this grass*, i. e. not only that mens sins are vile, but that themselves also are grass; nay, their glory and excellency is withering and fading; and therefore not only mountains must be pull'd down, but all flesh, and the glory of it wither, before the Lord shall be revealed.

I shall briefly open these four things:

1. What is this humiliation.
2. What need there is of it.
3. What means the Lord useth to work it.
4. What measure of it is here required.

1. What is this humiliation?

Answe. Look as pride is that sin, whereby a man conceited of some good in himself, and seeking some excellency to himself, exalts himself above God; so humiliation (in this place) is that work of the spirit whereby the soul being broken off from self-conceit, and self-confidence in any good it hath or doth, submitteth unto, or lieth under God, to be disposed of as he pleaseth, 1 Pet. 5. 6. Levit. 26.41. That look as compunction cuts the sinner off from that evil that is in him, so humiliation cuts it off from all high conceits, and self-confidence, of that good which is in him, or

or which he seeks might be in him, and so the soul is abased before God,

2. What need or necessity is there of this?

Because

Ans. 1. When the Lord hath wounded the hearts of his elect, this is the immediate work of their hearts, (if the Lord prevent them not by his grace, as many times he doth) they look to what good they have, or if they find little or none, they then seek for some in themselves, that thereby they may heal their wound, because they think thus, that as their sins have provoked God to anger against them, so if now they can reform and leave those sins, or if not, repent and be sorry for them ; if now they pray, and bear, and do as others do, they have some hope that this will heal their wound, and pacify the Lord towards them ; when they see there is no peace in a sinful course, they will therefore try if there be any to be found in a good course : And look as *Adam* when he saw his own shame and nakedness, hid himself from God in the bushes, and covered his nakedness with fig-leaves ; so the soul not being able to endure to see its own nakedness and vileness, not knowing Christ Jesus, and he being far to seek, doth therefore labour to cover his wickedness and sinfulness which he feels, by some of these fig-leaves. And hence, *Micah* 6. 7. they enquire wherewith they should come before the Lord, should they bring rivers of oil, or thousands of lambs, or the first born of their body to remove the sin of their soul ? *Paul* did account these duties gain, *Phil.* 3. 7. and set them at a high rate, because he thought that God did so himself : When the Lord hath wounded the soul, the first

voice

voice it speaks, is, What shall I do? Do; faith conscience, leave thy sins, do as well as others, do with all thy might, and strength, pray, hear, and confer, God accepts of good desires, and requires no more of any man but to do what he can. Hence the soul plies both oars, tho' against wind and tide, and strives, and wrastles with his sins, and hopes one day to be better, and here he rests. And observe it, look as sin is his greatest evil, so the casting away of his sins, and seeking to be better, is very sweet to him; and being so sweet, rests in what he hath, and seeks for what he wants, and so hopes all will be well one day, and so stays here; although (God knows) it be without Christ, nor cannot rest on him, though he hath heard of him a thousand times. And hence it is if they cannot do any thing to ease themselves, then their heart sink, or it may be quarrel with God, that he makes not better. But, beloved, it is wonderful to see how many times men rest in a little they have, and do.

2. But while it is thus with the soul, he is incapable of Christ; for he that trusts to other things to save him, or makes himself his own saviour, or rests in his duties without a saviour, he can never have Christ to save him, Rom. 9. 32. it is said, the Jews lost Christ's righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but sought salvation by their own righteousness. *He that maketh flesh his arm*, (as all duties and endeavours of man be, when trusted to) the Lord, saith, *Cursed be that man*, Jer. 17. 5, 6. Only the Lord doth not leave his elect here; he that is married unto the Law, Rom. 7. cannot be matcht unto Christ, till he be first divorced,

divorced, not from the duties themselves, but from trusting to them, and resting in them. And therefore saith Paul, Gal. 2. 19. *I through the law am dead to it, that I might live unto God.* He that trusteth to riches cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, no more than a camel through a needle's eye, because it is too big for so narrow a room: so he that trusteth to his duties and abilities, is too big to enter in by Christ; the Lord must cut off this spirit, and lay it low, and make it stoop as vile before God, before it can have Christ in this estate; the Lord must not only cut it off from this self-confidence in duties, but also so far forth as that the soul may lie under God, to be disposed of as he pleaseth. And the reason is, because such a soul is unwilling to stoop, is unhumbled; and he that is so, doth not only on his part resist God, but the Lord also resists him, Jam. 4. 7, 8. And hence you shall observe, many a one hath lain long under distress of conscience, because they have either rested in their duties, which could not quiet, or because they have not so cast off their confidence in them, so as to lie down quietly before God, that he may do what he will with them; being so long objects of God's resistance, not of his grace.

3. By what means doth the Lord work this?

Ans. In general, by the spirit immediately acting upon the soul; but after a Christian is in Christ he hath by the habit of humility, and the virtue of faith, some power to humble himself; but now the spirit of Christ doth it immediately by its own omnipotent hand; else the proud heart would never down: for we are first created in Christ

(which is by God's omnipotent immediate act) *unto good works*, before we do from our selves, or by the power of faith, put forth good works, Eph. 2. 10. These acts of self-confidence may not be stirring in all christians; but in all men there is this frame of spirit, never to come to Christ, if they can make any thing else serve to heal them or save them; and therefore the spirit cuts off this sinful frame in part in all the elect; he hews the roughness and pride of spirit off, that it may lie still upon the foundation it is now prepared for. Now though the spirit works this, yet 'tis not without the word; the word it works chiefly by, is the *law*, Gal. 3. 19. *I through the law am dead to it*, (i. e. from seeking any life or help from it) *that I might live unto God*.

Now the law doth this by a four fold act.

1. By discovering the secret corruptions of the soul in every duty, which it never saw before; if it once thought, I shall perish for my sin, if I continue therein, without confession of them, or sorrow for them; but it also did think that this confession, sorrow, and trouble for sin will serve to save it, and make God to accept of it: but the law (while the soul is earnestly striving against his sin) discovering that in all these there is nothing but sin, even secret sins it did never see before, hereupon it begins thus to think, Can these be the means of saving of me, which being so sinful, cannot but be the very causes of condemning of me? I know I must perish for the least sin, and now I see that in all I do, I can do nothing else but sin. What made Paul alive without the law? You shall find, Rom. 7. 7. it was because

because he did not know that *lust*, or the secret concupiscences and first risings of the soul to sin, were *sin* : he saw not these secret evils in all that which he did : and hence he rested in his duties, as one alive without Christ ; but the Lord by discovering this, let him see what little cause he had to lift up his hand, for any good he did : So it is here, when the soul sees that all its righteousness is a menstrual cloth, polluted with sin ; now those duties which like reeds it trusted to before, run into the hand, nay, heart of a poor sinner ; and therefore now it feels little cause of resting on them any longer : now it sees the infinite holiness of God by the exceeding spirituality of the law, it begins to cry out, How can I stand or appear before him with such continual pollutions ?

2. By irritating or stirring up of original corruption, in making more of that to appear than ever before ; that if the soul thinks, all I do is defiled with sin, yet my heart is good, and so it rests there ; the Lord therefore stirs that dunghill, and lets it see a more hellish nature than ever before, in that the holy and blessed command of God (to its feeling) makes it worse, more rebellious, more averse from God : Rom. 7. 9, 10, 11. *When the commandment came sin revived, faith Paul, and that which was for life was death to him, sin taking occasion by the law :* and hence Paul came to be slain and die to all his self-confidence. It was one of Luther's first positions in opposing the Popes indulgences, that *Lex & voluntas sunt duo aversarii sine gratia irreconciliabiles* : for the law and man's will meeting together, the one holy, the other

corrupt, make fierce opposition when the soul is under any lively work of the law; and by this irritation of the law, the Lord hath this end in his elect, to make them feel what wretched hearts they have, because that which is in it self a means of good, makes them (through man's corruption) more vile to their feeling than ever before; and hence comes those sad complaints on a soul under the humbling hand of Christ, I am now worse than ever I was, I grow every day worse and worse, I have lost what once I had, I could once pray, and seek God with delight, and never well but when one duty was done, to be in another; but now, I am worse, all that joy and sweetness in seeking of him, and in holy walking is gone; I could once mourn for sin, but now a hard heart takes hold of me, that I have not so much as a heart to any thing that is good, nor to shed a tear for the greatest evil. It is true, I confess you may grow (to your feeling) worse and worse, and it is fit you should feel it; that the Lord hereby might pull down your proud heart, and make you lie low; it is the Lord's glorious wisdom to wither all your flowers, which refreshed you without Christ, that you might feel a need of him; and therefore I say the Lord pulls away all those broken planks the soul once floated & rested upon, that the soul may sink in a holy despair of any help from any good it hath; the Lord shakes down all building on a sandy foundation: and then the soul cries out, It is ill resting here.

3. By loading, tyring, and wearying the soul by its own endeavours, until it can stir no more; for

The Sound Believer.

for this is in every man by nature ; when he sees that all he doth is sinful, and all he hath, his heart and nature to be most sinful ; yet he will not yet come out of himself, because he hopes though he be for the present thus vile, yet he hopes for future time his heart may grow better, and himself do better than now ; and hence it is that he strives, and seeks, and endeavours to his utmost to set up himself again, and to gain cure to all his troubles by his duties : now the law whose office is to command but not to give strength, and the spirit that should give strength withdrawing it self, because it knows the soul would rest therein without Christ ; hence it comes to pass that the soul feeling it self to labour only in the fire and smoak, and to be still as miserable and sinful as ever before, hereupon it is quite tyred out, and sits down weary, not only of its sin, but of its work, and now crys out, I see now what a vile and undone wretch I am, I can do nothing for God or for my self, only I can sin and destroy my self ; all that I am is vile, and all that I do is vile, I now see that I am indeed poor, and blind, and miserable and naked ; and the truth is, beloved, here comes in the greatest dejections of spirit ; for when the Lord smites the soul for sin, it hopes that by leaving of sin and doing better it may do well ; but when it sees that there is no hope here of healing the breach between God and it self, now it falls low indeed : and I take this to be the true meaning of Mat. 11. 28. Ye that labour, i.e. You that are wearied in your own way, in seeking rest to your souls by

your own hard labour or works (as the Greek word signifies) and are tyred out therein, and so are now *laden* indeed with sin and the heavy pressure of that, finding no ease by all that which you do : *come to me, faith Christ, and you shall then find rest unto your souls* : the Jews seeking to establish their own righteousness, seeking I say, if by any means they might establish it, lost Christ : the Lord therefore will make his elect know they shall seek here for ease in vain : and therefore tyers them out.

4. By clearing up the equity and justice of God in the law, if the Lord should never pity nor pardon it, nor shew any respect or favour to it ; for this is the frame of every man's heart, if he cannot find rest in his duties and endeavours, as he once expected he should, but sees sin and weakness, death and condemnation wrapping him about (like Jonah's weeds) in all he doth, then his heart sinks, and quarrels, and falls off farther from Christ by discouragement, and grows secretly impatient that there should be no mercy left for him, because it thinks now the Lord's eternal purpose is to exclude him ; for if there were any thoughts of peace toward him, he shculd have found peace before now, having so earnestly and frequently fought the Lord, and having done so much, and forsaken his sinful ways, according to his own commandment from him ; and hence it is, you shall find it a certain truth that the soul is turned back as far from God by sinking discouraging sorrows for sin, as ever it was to a state of security by the pleasures of sin ; and hence sometimes it thinks it is in vain to seek any
more

more, and hence leaves off duties ; and if conscience force it to them, yet it sinks again, because its foot is not establish'd upon the rock Christ, but upon the weakness of the waters of its own abilities and endeavours ; what therefore should the soul do in this case, to come to God ? it knows not, it cannot ; flie from him it dare not, it shall not ; the spirit therefore by revealing how equal and just it is for the Lord never to regard or look after it more, because it hath sinned and is still so sinful, makes it hereby to fall down prostrate in the dust before the Lord, as worthy of nothing but shame and confusion, & so kisseth the rod, and turns the other cheek unto the Lord even smiting of him, acknowledging if the Lord shew mercy, it will be wonderful ; if not, yet the Lord is righteous, and therefore hath no cause to quartel against him for denying special mercy to him, to whom he doth not owe a bid of bread. And now the soul is indeed humbled, because it submits to be disposed of, as God pleaseth ; thus the church in her humiliation, *Lam. 3. 22.* having in the former part of the chapter *drunk the wormwood and the gall*, at last lies down and professeth, *it is the Lord's mercy, it is not consumed* ; and ver. 29. *he puts his mouth to the dust if there may be any hope* ; and ver. 39. *Why should a living man complain for the punishment of his sin ?* You think the Lord doth you wrong, and neglects your good and his own glory too, if he doth not give you peace and pardon, grace and mercy, even to the utmost of your asking, and then think you have hence good cause to fret, and sink, and be discouraged ; No, no, the Lord will pull down those mountains, tho;

those high thoughts, and make you lie low at his feet, and acknowledge that it is infinite mercy you are alive, and not consumed ; and that there is any hope or possibility of mercy, and that you are out of the nethermost pit : and that if he should never pity you, yet he doth you no wrong, but that which is equal and just, and that it is fit your sinful froward wills should stoop to his holy, righteous, and good will, rather than that it should stoop and be crooked according unto yours. Believe it brethren *he that judgeth not himself thus, shall be judged of the Lord, 1 Cor. 11. 31.* how can you have mercy that will set your selves up in God's sovereign throne to dispose of it, and will not lie down humbly under it, that it may dispose of you ? for are you worthy of it ? hath the Lord any need of you ? have you not provoked him exceedingly ? was there ever any that dealt worse with him than you ? O beloved lie low here ; & learn of the church, *Micah 7.9. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* It was a most blessed frame of spirit in *Aaron, Lev. 10. 3.* when he saw God's hand against him in cutting off his children, and *Aaron held his peace ;* so if the Lord should cast thee off, cut thee off, never take pleasure in such a polluted broken vessel unsit for any use for him, hold thou thy peace ; quarrel not, be silent before him, and say as they did, *2 Cor. 12. 5. The Lord is righteous, but I am vile ; let him do with me what seems good in his own eyes :* and thus the Lord Jesus by the law doth dead the soul to the law, until it be made to submit like wax, or like clay to the hand of the potter, to frame it a vessel to what use he pleaseth ; and

and as the apostle most excellently, *Rom. 7. di-*
vorceth it from its first husband, (i. e. sin and the
law) that it may be married unto Jesus Christ. In
a word, when the Lord Christ hath made the soul
feel not only its inability to help it self, and so
*faith as Paul, *Gal. 2. 20. It is not I, but also its own**
unworthiness, that the Lord should help it, and so
crys out with Job, Behold, I am vile ; now at this
*instant, 'tis *vas capax* ; a vessel capable (though*
*unworthy) of any grace, *Jam. 4. 6.**

4. The last question remains, What measure of humiliation is here necessary ?

Ans̄w. Look as so much conviction is necessary
which begets compunction, and so much compunction
as breeds humiliation ; so, so much humiliation
is necessary as introduceth faith, or as
drives the soul out of it self unto Christ : for as
the next end of conviction is compunction, and
that of compunction is humiliation ; so the next
end of humiliation is faith, or coming to Christ,
which we shall next speak unto.

And whence it is that the Lord calls unto *the weary*
*and heavy laden to come unto him, *Mat. 11. 27.** So
much as makes you come for rest to Christ, so much
is necessary, & no more. If any can come without
being thus laden and weary in some measure, let
them come and drink of the water of life freely ;
but a proud heart that will make it self its own
saviour, will not come to the Lord Jesus to be
his saviour ; he that will be his own physician, so
long cannot send out for another. Nay, let me
fall one degree lower, if the soul cannot come to
Christ, (as who feel not themselves unable when
the

the Lord comes to draw ?) and find not the Lord Jesus coming unto them, to draw them and compel them in ; yet if the soul be so far humbled, as not to resist the Lord, by quarrelling with him, and at him, as unworthy of the least smile, as worthy of all frowns ; verily the Lord will come to it, and no more is requisite than this, and thus much certainly is : For thus the whole scripture runs, *He gives grace to the humble*, James 4. 6. *I dwell with the contrite and humble*, Isai. 57. 16. *The poor afflicted shall not always be forgotten*, Psal. 9. 12, 18. When their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, so as to accept of the punishment of their iniquity, the Lord then remembers his covenant, Lev. 26. 41, 42. Conceive it thus : There can be no union to Christ, while there is a power of resistance and opposition against Christ. The Lord Christ must therefore in order of nature (for I now speak not of order of time) first *removere probibens*, remove this resistance, before he can, and that he may, unite. I do not mean resistance of the frame of grace, but (as was said) of the Lord of grace, whereby he comes to work it.

Now there is a double resistance or two parts of this resistance, like a knife with two edges.

1. A resistance of the Lord, by a secret unwillingness that the Lord should work grace : Now this the Lord removes in compunction, and no more brokenness for sin or from sin is necessary there than that.

2. A resistance of the Lord by sinking discouragements, & a secret quarrelling with him, in case the soul imagines he will not come to work grace, or manifest grace. Now this the Lord takes away

humiliation ; and no more is necessary here, than the removal of the power of this which makes the soul in the sense of its own infinite vileness and unworthiness not to quarrel at the Lord, and devil-like grow fierce and impatient before and against the Lord, in case he should never help it, never pity it, never succour it ; *the Lord will not forsake for ever, if the soul thus lies down, and putt its mouth in the dust, Lam. 3. 30. 31.*

Which consideration is of unspeakable use and consolation, to every poor empty nothing, that feels it self unable to believe, and the Lord forsaking it, from helping it to believe. And I have seen it constantly, that many a chosen vessel never hath been comforted till now, and ever comforted when now ; they never knew what hurt them till they saw this, and they have immediately felt their hurt healed, when this hath been removed. In comforting christians under deep distress, tell them of God's grace and mercy, and the riches of both, you do but torment them the more, that there should be so much, and they have no part, nor share in it, and think they never shall, because this is not the immediate way of cure ; tell them rather when they are full of those complaints, that they are as they speak, vile, and sinful, and therefore worthy never to be accepted of God, and that they have cause to wonder that they have their lives, and are on this side hell, and so turn all that they say to humiliation and self-loathing ; verily you shall then see, if the Lord intends good, he will by this do them good, and the weakest christian that cannot come to Christ, you shall see first or last shall see cause to

lie down, and be silent, and not quarrel, though the Lord should never come to him. And that this is necessary, may appear thus : Otherwise,

1. The Lord should not advance the riches of his grace ; the advancement of grace cannot possibly be without the humiliation and abasement of the creature ; the Lord not only saves, but calls things that *are not*, that *no flesh might glory*, *1 Cor. 1. 28, 29.*

2. Otherwise the Lord should not be Lord and disposer of his own grace, but a sinful creature who quarrels against God, if it be not disposed of, not as the Lord will, but as the creature will. If a stranger comes to our house, and will have what he wants, and if he hath not, he quarrels and contends with the master of the house, what would he say ? Away proud beggar, dost think to be lord of what I have ? dost draw thy knife to stab me, if I do not please thee and give thee thy asking ? no, thou shalt know that I will do with my own as I see good, thou shalt lie down on the dust of my threshold before I give thee any thing. So 'tis with the Lord, *It is not in him that wills, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy.* It is his principal name, *I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful* ; and therefore if you will not believe me, yet believe the Lord's oath, *Isai. 45. 23. Unto me shall every knee bow*, and do you come to lord it over him, an quarrel, and fret, and sink, and grow sulen, and vex, if the Lord stoop not unto your desires ? No, no, you must and shall lie upon his threshold, nay he will make thee lay thy neck upon

upon the block, as worthy of nothing but cutting off ; then when this *valley is filled, all flesh shall see the glory of the Lord*, *Isai. 40. 5.* Thus humiliation is necessary in this measure mentioned. Not that I deny any subsequent humiliation, after a christian is in Christ, arising from the sense of God's favour in Christ, than which nothing makes a christian of an evangelical spirit more ashamed of himself : yet I dare not exclude this which is antecedent, arising from the spirit of power immediately subduing the soul to Christ, that it may be exalted by Christ, *1 Pet. 5. 6.* It is true, all things that pertain to life and godliness are received by faith, *2 Pet. 1. 3.* yet faith it self is a faving work, which is not received by another precedent faith. Faith therefore is to be excepted, not only as begotten in us, but as it is in the begetting of it in the conviction and humiliation of every sinner.

Use 1. Hence see what is the great hindrance between the mercy of God, and the soul of many a man ; if it be not some sin and hardness of heart under it, whereby he cares not for Christ, to deliver him, then 'tis pride of spirit arising from some good he hath, whereby he feels no need of Christ, hoping his own duties shall save him, or else is above Christ, and not under him, willing to be dispensed of by him. And hence the Lord makes this the high way to mercy, *Levit. 26. 40.* if first they shall confess their sin, secondly, humble themselves, (both which I know the Lord must work) then *he will remember his covenant.* Look as it is with a vessel before it can be fit for use, it must first pass through fire, and the earth and dross severed from it, then it must be made hollow & empty,

which makes it *was capax*, a vessel capable of receiving that which shall be poured out into it ; if (O Brethren) the Lord hath some vessels of glory which he prepares before-hand, and makes capable of glory, *Rom. 9, 21. 22.* if the Lord doth not sever you from sin in compunction, and empty you of your selves in humiliation, you cannot receive Christ, nor mercy, you cannot hold them ; and if ever you miss of Christ by faith, your wound lies here. How many be there at this day, that were once profane and wicked, but now by some terrors and outward restraints upon them, they leave their sins, and say they loath them, and purpose never to run riot as they have done, and hence because they think themselves very good, or to have some good, they fall short of Christ, and are still in the gall of bitterness, and in the midst of all evil. It were the happiness of some men, if they did not think themselves to have some good, because this is their Christ. O you that live under precious means, and have many fears you may perish and be deceived at the last : But why do you fear ? I know you will answer, Oh some secret and unknown sin may be my ruin ; It is true, and you do well to have a godly jealousy thereof. But remember this also, not only some sin, but some good thou thinkest thou hast, and resteth in without Christ. And lifting thee up above Christ, may as easily prove thy ruin, because a man's own righteousness is rested in, doth not only hide mens sins, but strengthens them in some sin by which men perish ; *Trusting to ones own righteousness, and committing iniquity are couples,* *Ezek. 33. 13.* Nor do I hereby run into the tren-
ches

ches of that wicked generation of the familists, denying all inherent graces ; evidence of favour from any christians obedience, or sanctification in holy duties ; or that a christian should profanely cast off all duties, because they cannot save themselves by them : No, no, the Lord will search with candles one day for such sons of darkness, and exclude such *foolish Virgins* that they have neither *oyl* in their vessels, nor *light* in their lamps : I only speak of that good, that righteousness which is rested in without Christ, and lifts up men above Christ, which in deed and in truth is not true righteousness, but only a true shadow of it. And therefore as *Bezz* well observes from Rom. 9. 32. *Why did not Israel, that followed after righteousness attain it ? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law :* they were not fruits of sincere obedience to the law, but *as it were* the works of the law ; now this, saith the apostle, ver. 33. *is the stumbling-stone in Sion.* Christ will have all flesh vail, and be stript naked, and made nothing before him, before they shall ever be built upon him ; now this men stumble at, they must bring something to him, they will not be *vile, emptines and nothingnes*, that he *may* be all to them ; verily observe your selves and you shall find, if there be little humiliation, there is little of Christ ; if much humiliation, much of Christ ; if unconstant humiliation, uncertain fruition of Christ ; if real humiliation, real possession of Christ ; if false humiliation, imaginary fruition of Christ. Know it, you cannot perish if you fall not short here, you must perish if you do.

Use 2. Be exhorted therefore to lie down in the dust before the Lord, and under the Lord; nay, intreat the Lord that he would put thee upon his wheel, and mould thy heart to his will; why will you rest in any good you have? O remember thy father was a *Syrian* ready to perish, and thy self polluted, an infinite endless evil. Whatever good thou dost, is it not a polluted *stream*, of a more polluted *spring*? nay, suppose the spirit works any good in thee, yet is it not polluted by thy unclean heart? Nay, suppose any actions should be perfect, yet remember that the Lord spared not the angels that sinned; perfection present cannot satisfy justice for pollution past. Cry out therefore, and say, O Lord, now I see not only that my sin is vile, but that my self and all my righteousness is vile also; and now though the Lord stands at a distance, speaks no peace, hears no prayers, yet because thou art very vile, lie down under him, that if he will he may tread upon thee, and thereby exalt himself, as well as lift thee up, and exalt thee. Be not careless whether the Lord help or no, but be humbled, not to quarrel in case he should not: For,

1. Suppose thou art not only miserable, but sinful, and the Lord (thou say'st) takes it not away, yet remember that to quarrel with God for withdrawing his hand, is a sin also, Lam. 3.39. and wilt thou add sin to sin?

2. Why art thou quiet and still when the Lord denys thee any common mercy? Is it not because the Lord will have it so? Now look as we say of him that hates sin as sin, that he hates all sin; so he that is meekned with God's good pleasure

sure in any one thing because of his good pleasure in it, upon the same ground will at least desire to stoop in every thing. Suppose therefore it be the Lord's good pleasure to deny thee mercy, I grant you must pray for it, yet with submission to the good will of the Lord, saying, the Lord's will is good, but mine is evil, otherwise, thou hast no meekness in any thing, that art not meekly subject to his will in every thing.

3. The greatest pride that is in man, appears here; for suppose the Lord should deny thee bread, or water, or cloaths, was it your duty to murmur now? nay, was it not pride, if the heart would not lie down, and say, Lord I am worthy to have my bread pluckt from my mouth, and my cloaths from my back. Now if it be pride to murmur in case the Lord denys you smaller matters, the offals of this life, dost not thou see that it's far greater pride for thee to sink and quarrel with him, if he denys thee greater, and the things of another life? is he bound to give thee greater, that doth not owe thee the least? Suppose a beggar murmur at thy door, if thou dost deny him bread, or a cup of drink, wilt thou not account him a proud stout beggar? but if thou givest him that, and then he quarrel and murmur at thee because thou dost not give him a thousand pound, or thy whole estate when he asks it, will you not say, I never met with the like insolency? the Lord gives you your lives, blessed be his name, but you ask for treasures of grace and mercy, thousands of pounds, Christ himself, and all that he is worth, and the Lord seems to deny you, and now you sink and grow sullen, and discontent, and

quarrel, and murmur at God, not directly, but secretly, and slyly, may not the Lord now say ; Was there ever such pride and insolency ? And therefore as Christ spake of himself, John 12. 24, 25. *A corn of wheat cannot live unless it die first* ; so know it, you shall never live with Christ, unless you die and perish in your selves, unless you be down and lie under the clods of your own wretchedness, faith will never spring up in such a soul. As 'tis in burnings, the fire must be first taken out, before there can be any healing ; so this impatient spirit which torments the soul, must first be removed, before the Lord will heal thee.

4. Consider the approaching times : I do believe the Lord at this day is coming out to shake all nations, all hearts, all consciences, all conditions, and to tear and rend from you your choicest blessings, peace and plenty, both external and internal also ; for there is need of it, our age grows full, and proud, and wanton, man's price is fallen in the market, unless his locks and new fashions commend him to the world. O consider when God comes to rend all from you, then you may find a need of the exercise of this duty ; it may be the time is coming wherein you shall have nothing to support your hearts, you shall find rest in no way but this : I know assurance of God's love may quit you ; but what if the Lord shake all your foundations and deprive you of that ? what will you do then ? and therefore as Zephany, cap. 2. 3. having foretold of the evil day, crys unto his hearers, *Seek meekness ye meek of the earth* ; seek meekness ; so say I to you : for you will find all little enough. Come down from thy throne and be

be the footstool and threshold of Christ Jesus, before the days of darkness come upon you ; be content to be a cypher, a stepping-stone, the very offall of the world.

Quest. But you will say, Wherein should I express this humiliation and subjection ?

Answe. 1. Be highly thankful for any little the Lord gives, *Lam. 3. 22, 23.*

2. Be humble and judge thy self worthy of nothing when the Lord denys ; and verily you shall find the Lord Jesus ere long speaking peace unto you, and giving thee rest in his bosom, that now art quietly contented to lie still at his feet.

For some helps thereunto,

1. Remember whose thou art, *viz.* the Lord's clay, and he thy potter, and therefore may do with thee *what he will*, *Rom. 9. 20.*

2. Remember what thou art, *viz.* a polluted vessel, a kind of infinite endless evil, as I have oft said ; see the picture of thy own vileness in the damned in hell who are full, and shall thro' all eternity pour out all manner of evil, *Job. 40.*

3. 4.

3. Remember what thou hast been, and how long thou hast made was against Christ with all thy might and heart, and strength ; why should the Lord therefore choose thee before others, *Jer. 3. 5.* when as, (ask thy conscience) was there ever such a wretch since the world began as thou hast been.

4. Remember what thou wilt be : fit for no use to Jesus Christ, good for nothing, but to pollute his holy name when thou medlest with it ; and

and why should the Lord take up such a dry leaf,
Hai. 64. 6. and breath upon such a dry bone?

5. Remember how good the Lord's will is, even when it crosseth thine ; he shall have infinite glory by all his denials to thee of what thou wouldest ; he shall gain *that*, though thou loosest thy peace & quietness, that good which thy foolish sinful will desires at his hand, John 12. 27, 28. and if so, blessed be his name, let God live, but let man die and perish, that he may be exalted of vile man.

6. Remember the sweet rest thou shalt have by this subjection to the Lord ; nothing is man's cross, but man's will ; a stubborn will like a stubborn heifer in the yoke galls and frets the soul ; *Learn meekness*, saith our Saviour, *of me in taking my yoke on you, and then you shall find rest*. Hell would not be hell, to a heart truly humbled. Sometimes you find enlargements, then you are glad : sometime none, then you sink : sometimes you have hope of mercy, then you are calm : sometimes you lose your hopes, then the sea works : when the Lord pleaseth you, then you are well, but if a little cross befall you, then your spring is muddy, and a little thing troubles : Oh be humble and vile in thine own eyes, and verily such uncertain fits of peace and trouble are done, and the days of all your mourning are now ended.

Use 3. Of thankfulness, to all those whom the Lord hath truly humbled : Tyme was, when the Lord first convicted you, that so long as you could make any shift, find rest in any duties, you would never lie down at Christ's feet, now the Lord might have left you to have stumbled at that stumbling

bling-stone, and to have stuck in those bushes, but you may see that the Lord will save you even then when you would not be saved by him : and especially take notice of two passages of God's dealings with you, wherein usually you find matter of discouragement, rather than of acknowledgement of God's goodness to you therein.

1. That the Lord hath withdrawn all feeling of any good, which it may be once you felt, and that the Lord hath let out more of the evil of your hearts than ever you imagined was in them, nay so much evil that you think there is none like unto you, who hast now no heart nor power to stir, think, desire, will or do any thing that is good : O bless the Lord for this, for this is God's way to humble, and empty, and make thee poor ; the Lord saw (though it may be you did not) that you rested in that good you felt, and was or would be lifted up by these, and therefore the Lord hath broke those crazy crutches, famisht now, brought you down to nothing, made you like dry desarts ; all the hurt the Lord aimeth at in this, being only to humble you, and though these desertions be bitter for the present, yet that by these he might do you good in your latter end, Deut. 6. 19. O brethren the apostle stands at a stay and desires the Corinthians to consider, You see your calling, saith he, 1 Cor. 1. Not many mighty, not many wise, but things that are not doth he call, that no flesh might glory : The Lord, saith Moses, Deut. 8. 2, 3. suffered thee to want (that was the first) and then fed thee, that he might prove thee and humble thee ; remember this, saith he : So say I to you remember this mercy, that when the Lord makes you worst of all (not real, but)

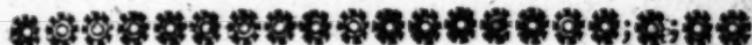
in your own eyes, that then then the Lord is about this glorious work.

2. That the Lord hath kept you (it may be a long time too) from sight and sense of his peculiar love ; one would wonder why the Lord should hide his love so much, so long, from those to whom he doth intend it ; the great reason is, because there is in many a one, a heart desitous of his love, and this would quiet them, if they were sure of it : they never come to be quieted with God's will, in case they think they shall never partake of his love : but are above that, oppose and resist and quarrel with that, unhumbled under that, the Lord therefore intending to bestow his favour only upon a humbled sinner, he will therefore hide his face until they lie low, and acknowledge themselves worthy of nothing but extremity of misery, unworthy of the least mercy : The people of God, Lam. 1. 16. cry out that *the comforter which should refresh their soul was far from them* : what was God's end in this ? you shall see the end of it, ver. 18. *The Lord is righteous*, (here the church is humbled) *for I have rebelled* ; or (as Zanchius reads it) *I have made his mouth bitter*, that the Lord speaks no peace to me, but bitter things. The cause is in my own self, and therefore if he never comfort me, nor speak good word unto me, yet he is righteous, but I am vile ; and you will find this certain, that as the Lord therefore humbles that he may exalt, so the Lord never refuseth to exalt (in hiding his face) but it is to humble. And is this the worst the Lord aims at, and will you not be thankful ? why are you then discouraged when you find it

thus

thus with you? do not say the Lord never dealt thus with any as with me; suppose that; the reason then is, because the Lord sees, never had any such a high heart as thou hast; but Oh be thankful; that notwithstanding this, he will take the pains to take it down.

4. Thus much for humiliation; I come now to the fourth and last, which is Faith.



S E C T. V.

*The fourth and last Act of Christ's Power,
is the Work of Faith.*

THE Lord having wounded and humbled his elect, and laid them down dead at his feet, they are now as unable to believe as they were to humble their own souls; and therefore now the Lord takes them up in his arms, that they lean and rest on the bosom of their beloved by faith. After *Joseph* had spoken roughly to his brethren, and thereby brought the blood of their brother to remembrance, and so had humbled them; and then he can contain no longer, but discovers himself to them, and tells them, I am *Joseph* whom you wickedly sold, yet fear not; so doth our Saviour carry it towards his elect, when he laid them low: now is the very season for him to advance the glory of his grace, he cannot now contain himself any longer; but having torn and taken away

that

that vail of sin and of the law from off their hearts, now they see the Lord with open face, even the end of that which was to be abolished, 2 Cor. 3. The explication of the great work, is of exceeding great difficulty; nothing more stirring than faith in a true christian, because he lives by it, yet it is very little known; as children in the womb, that know not that navel-string by which they principally live: I shall therefore be wary, and leaving larger explications, acquaint you with the nature of faith, in this brief description of it.

Faith is that gracious work of the spirit, whereby an humbled sinner receiveth Christ; or whereby the whole soul cometh out of it self to Christ, for Christ and all his benefits, upon the call of Christ in his Word.

Before I open this particular, give me leave to premise some general considerations; faith is the complement of effectual vocation, which begins in God's call, and ends in this answer to that call; the Lord prevents a poor humbled soul, with his call, either not knowing how, or not able, or not daring to come; and then the soul comes, and hence *men called, and believing are all one*, Rom. 9. 24. with 33. Many a wounded sinner will be scrambling after Christ from some general reports of him, before the day and hour of God's glorious and gracious call. Now for any to receive Christ, or come to Christ, before he is called, is presumption; to refuse Christ when called, is rebellion; to come and receive when called, is properly and formally faith, and that which the scripture stiles, the *obedience of faith*, Roma. 1. 5. And now Christ

at

at this instant is fully and freely given, on God's part, when really and freely come unto and taken on our part.

This receiving of Christ, or coming to Christ are for substance the same, though the words be divers; the holy Ghost useth to express one and the same thing in variety of words, that our feebleness might the better understand what he meaneth. And hence in Scripture, believing, coming, receiving Christ, rolling, rustling, cleaving to the Lord, &c. set out one and the same thing; and therefore it is no wonder if our divines have different descriptions of faith in variety of words; which if well considered do but set out one and the same thing: and I do conceive they do all agree in this description I have now mentioned; I know there are some who tread awry here, whom I shall briefly note out, and so pass on to what we intend,

1. The Papists, with some others of corrupt judgments, at least of weak apprehensions among our selves, describe faith to be nothing else but a supernatural assent to a divine truth, because of a divine testimony: *ex. gr.* to assent to this truth, that Christ is come, that he is the Son of God; that he was dead and is risen again, that he is the saviour of the world, &c. and to confirm this they produce *Mat. 16. 16. 1 John 4. 3.*

Answ. It is granted that this assent is in faith, for faith alway hath respect to some testimony; for man by his fall hath lost all knowledge of divine and supernatural truths; hence God reveals them in his word; hence faith sees them and assents to them, because God hath spoken them: to see and know things by vision, is to see things in themselves.

themselves intuitively and immediately ; but to see things by faith is to see them by and in a testimony given of them, *John 20. 20. Blessed is he that hath not seen, (i. e. Christ immediately) but believed, i. e. his testimony, and on him in it ;* this assent therefore is in faith (for we must believe Christ before we can believe in him) but this comprehends not the whole nature of faith ; I mean of that faith we are now speaking of, *wiz. as it unites us to Christ, and posseseth us with Christ.* For,

1. This description placeth faith only in the understanding, whereas 'tis also in the will, as the words *trusting, rolling, &c. intimate.*

2. This assent is meerly general, without particular application, which is ever in true faith, *Gal. 2. 20.*

3. This is such a faith, as the devils may have, *James 2. 19. and reprobate men may have. 2 Pet. 2. 22, 21. Heb. 10. 26.* There is a wilful refusing of the known truth.

4. It is the Papists aim to vilify faith hereby, by describing it by that which is one ingredient in it, but excluding that which is principal ; those phrases therefore of *believing Christ is come in the flesh, 1 John 4. 3. and that he is the Son of God, Mat. 16. 16.* as if this were the only object to faith, are not to be understood exclusively, excluding other acts of faith, which the Scripture in other places sets down clearly ; but inclusively, as supposing them to be contained herein : for as we in our times describing faith by relying upon Christ for salvation, do not exclude hereby our believing that he is the Messiah ; but we include it, or suppose

pose it, because that is not now questioned, the truth of the gospel being so abundantly cleared; so in those times, they described faith by one principal act, to believe that he was the Son of God, and come into the flesh, because this was the main and principal thing in question then: and if the Lord had not set our faith by other acts in scripture, we shall not vary from our compals in such expressions in the word in these days: for their faith then, is exemplary to us now; because the word doth more fully set it out in more special acts, hence we set it also by them; for 'tis evident, as the Jews did believe in a Messiah to come, so they did also believe, and look for all good from him, *John 4. 25. He will teach us all things when he comes;* and therefore their faith did not confine it self to that historical act that a Messiah should come, or that this was the Messiah, but they did expect and look for all good from him: And hence the apostle expounding this saying, *vix. believing that Christ is dead and risen again, we shall hereby be saved: Rom. 10. 9, 10. If thou believest (saith he) with thine heart this truth, thou shalt be saved,* Now to believe with the heart, as it doth not exclude assent, so it necessarily includes the acts of the will and affections in relying upon him; and coming to him. And hence, when Peter had made that confession, *Acts 16. 16.* Christ tells him, *You are Peter; i. e. a stone resting upon the rock, (as some good interpreters expound it)* and therefore Peter's faith did not exclude these principal acts of resting on Christ, cleaving to Christ, but did include and suppose them.

2. Some run into another extream, and make faith nothing else, but a perswasion or assurance that Christ died for me in particular, or that he is mine. That which moves some thus to think, is the universal redenaption by the death of Christ ; they know no ground or bottom for faith but this proposition, Christ died for thee, and hence makes redemption universal : And hence the Arminians boast so much of their *Quod unusquisque tenatur credere, &c.* But

1. This is a false bottom, for Christ hath not died for all, because he hath not prayed for all, *John 17. 2.*

2. This is a sandy bottom and foundation, which when a christian rests upon, it shakes under him, when the soul shall think, though Christ hath died for me, yet no more for me, than for *Judas*, or thousands of reprobates now in hell. Indeed after faith, a christian is bound to believe it, as *Paul* did, *Gal. 2. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 1, 2.*

I conceive therefore those holy men of ours who have described faith by assurance, have not so much aimed at a description of what faith is in it self, as it possesseth us with Christ ; but of what degree and extent it may be, and should be in us ; they describe it therefore by the most eminent act of it, in full assurance : and therefore consult with the authors of this description, and inquire of them, Is there no doubting mixt with faith ? Yes, say they, man's doubtings sometimes are even unto a kind of despair, but then (say they) it should not be thus. The Papists commend doubtings, and deny assurance, place faith in a general assent ; our champions that were to wrastle

wrastle with them, maintained it to be a particular application, (and not only a general assent) and that with a full assurance of perswasion, which being the most eminent act of faith, excludes not other inferiour acts of it, which as they are before it, so may possess the soul with Christ without it. Although with all, it is certain, that there is no true faith, but it hath some assurance, of which afterward.

Let me now come to the explication of the description given, where note these five things :

1. The efficient cause of faith, it is a work of the spirit.
2. The subject, or matter in which it is seated, *viz.* the soul of an humble sinner.
3. The form of it, *viz.* the coming of the whole soul to Christ.
4. The end of it, *viz.* for Christ and all his benefits.
5. The special ground and means of it, *viz.* the call of Christ in his word,

1. The efficient cause of faith.

Faith is a gracious work of the spirit of Christ, the spirit therefore is the efficient cause or principal workman of faith ; the spirit doth not believe, but causeth us to believe ; 'tis not *principium quod*, the principle which doth believe, but *principium quo*, the principle by which we do ; the souls of all the elect (especially when humbled) are, of all other things, most unable to believe : nay, look as before compunction and humiliation, satan held the soul captive chiefly by its lusts and sins ; so now when the Lord hath burnt those cords, and broken those chains, all the powers of darkness

Strengthen themselves, and keep the soul under mightily, by unbelief. What do you tell me of mercy? (faith the soul) 'tis mercy which I have continually resisted, desperately despised; why do you perswade me to believe? Alas! I cannot; 'tis true, all that which you say is true, if I could believe, but I cannot see Christ, I cannot come at Christ, I seek him in the means, but he forsakes me there, and I am left of God desolate; and here beloved, the soul had not formerly so many excuses for its sin, as now it hath clouds of objections against believing; the spirit therefore takes fast hold of the souls of all the elect, draws them unto Christ; and therefore it is called *the spirit of faith*, 2 Cor. 4. 13. and that by an omnipotent and irresistible power, Isai. 53. 1. *Who hath believed? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* that the soul must and shall believe now. *Compell them to come in*, saith the Lord of the Supper, Luke 14. 23. This the Arminians will not believe, for (say they) the question is not, whether we are enabled to believe by grace? but, whether it be after this manner, and by this means, *viz. modi irresistibili?* Consider therefore these reasons, to clear this point.

1. Whence doth our call and coming to Christ arise, but from God's immovable and unchange-purpose? Rom. 8. 28. the Lord therefore must either alter his purpose, or prevail with the soul to believe, and over-power the heart thereunto.

2. Is not Christ Jesus bound by office and promise to the Father to bring in all his lost scattered sheep, that so the Father and he may be glorified in them? John 10. 16. *Other sheep I have, those I*

must bring home, and they shall hear my voice. You that complain you cannot believe, nay that you have no heart to believe, the Lord must fetch you in; and you shall hear the Bridegroom's voice with joy.

3. Is not the act of believing wrought by a creating power? Eph. 1. 9. and 2. 10. Isai. 57. 18, 19. *I create the fruit of the lips peace, peace to him that is near, and afar off:* and is not a creating voice irresistible, though there be nothing for it to work upon? so though you have no ability, heart, head, or strength to believe, yet the Lord will create the fruit of the lips of God's messengers peace, peace.

4. Doth not the Lord let in that infinite and surpassing sweetness of grace, when he works the soul to believe, standing in extream need of that grace, that it cannot but come and cleave to it? Psal. 63. 2, 3. *I long to see thee, saith David, for thy loving kindness is better than life;* it is impossible for a man to cleave to his life; much more to that which is better than life: the light is so clear, it cannot but see and wonder at grace; the good is so sweet, it cannot but taste and accept what God so freely offers; Psal. 36. 7. and therefore the poor canaanitish woman, Mat. 15. could not be driven away, though Christ bid her in a manner be gone; but she made all the objections against her arguments for her (as usually faith doth, when under this stroak of the spirit) *The violent take the kingdom of heaven by force;* the spirit puts a necessity upon them, and irresistably over-powers them; and this is the cause of it.

And

And is not this matter of great consolation to all those who feel themselves utterly unable to believe? you think the Lord would give peace and pardon, life and mercy, if I could believe; Oh consider the Lord hath undertaken in the covenant of grace to work in all his the condition of the covenant, as well as to convey the good of it, *Jer. 31. 31, 32, 33, 34.* He hath done this for others by an irresistible power, *Heb. 12. 1, 2.* Look up to Jesus the author and finisher of your faith, he came out of his Father's bosom, not only to give life by his death, but to enable his to eat and close with him by faith, that they might *never die*, *John 6. 50.* so that the Lord may work it in thee; it is true also, he may not, yet it is unspeakable comfort to consider, that if the Lord had put it over unto thee to believe, it is certain thou shouldest never have believed, but now the work is put into the hand of Christ; that which is impossible to thee, is possible, nay easy, with him; he can comprehend thee, when thou canst not apprehend him: this is exceeding sweet when the body is sick, and soul is deserted, incredible things to be believed, are propounded, an impossible work to thy weakness urged, upon pain of God's forest and most unspeakable wrath; to consider it is not in me, but in the Lord's own hand, and it is his office, his glory to work faith, and as the apostle speaks, *to shew mercy unto them that are shut up*, not only *under sin*, but also *unbelief*; *Rom. 11. 32.* But why hath the Lord made thee feel thy inability to believe? truly the end of our wants is not to make us sin and shift for our selves, but to ask and seek for supply, and the end of the continu-

ance.

ance of those wants is, that we should continue to ask and seek. And dost thou think thou shalt seek to the Lord by his own hand to create faith, and fetch thee in, and will not the Lord take his time to work it ? *He that believes, saith the apostle, Röm. 10. 11. shall not be ashamed*; why so ? because the Lord, saith he, who is over all, is rich unto all that call upon him, ver. 12. If thou hast not a heart shut up from asking of it ; the Lord who hath power, hath not a heart shut up towards thee from working it.

But withall be thankful exceedingly, all you whose hearts the Lord hath drawn and overcome ; he came to his own people the Jews, and would oft have gathered them, but they would not, and therefore he forsook them, and left their habitations desolate ; Oh how oft would the Lord have gathered you, and you would not ! yet the Lord hath not forsaken you, but called you in whether you would or no ; the Lord hath taken many a man at his first word, and left him at the first repulse, shaken off the dust of his feet presently, *Mat. 10. 14.* without any more intreaties to accept of mercy ; yet thou hast not only refused, but even crucified the Son of God, yet he hath not been driven from thee, but his bowels have been oft kindled together, when he hath been ready to give thee up : when thou hast been under the hedges, and in the high ways that lead to death, and didst never think of him, nor didst desire him, yet he hath compelled thee to come in ; he hath made thee feel such an extream need of him, and made himself so exceeding sweet, that thou hast not been able to resist his love, but to cry

cry out, Lord thou hast overcome me with mercy, I am not able to resist any more, nay which is more wonderful, when thou hast been gathered, and gone from him, and lost thyself and him also again, and it may be has been offended at him ; yet he hath gone before thee into Galilee, and gathered thee up when thou hast been as water spilt upon the ground ; what should be cause of this, but only this ? the work of faith lies upon him, both to begin and finish ; he must gather in all his lost sheep, and therefore he hath put forth an irresistible power of his spirit upon thy heart, which must carry thee captive after him.

Object. I am afraid my faith hath been rather presumption, a work of my own power, than faith wrought by the spirit's power ; how may I discern that ?

Ans^w. 1. If you are wrapt up in God's covenant, if any promise be actually yours, it is no presumption to take possession by faith of what is your own ; dost thou seriously will Christ, and resolve never to give the Lord rest, until he give thee rest in him ? then see Rev. 22. 17. *Whosoever will let him take of the water of life,* Dost thou thirst after Christ ? then read Isai. 55. 1, 2; 3. John 7. 37. *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* When Christ saw their faith, Mat. 9. 1, 2. What said he ? *Son be of good cheer thy sins be forgiven,* the word signifies, be confident. It is no presumption to believe pardon of sins now thou art come unto me, not only for the healing of thy body, but especially for pardon of sin. It is the great sin of many saints, when they do thirst, and believe, and come to Christ, and so are under the promise

promise of grace ; yet they think it presumption now to believe and take possession of all those treasures that be in Christ, but look that the Lord should first make them feel, and then they will believe ; whereas faith should now receive and drink in abundantly of the fulness of Christ : shall it be accounted presumption for any man to eat his own bread, and drink his own drink, and put on his own cloaths ? the promise makes Christ and all his benefits your own, therefore it is no presumption to apply them.

2. Suppose you cannot find your self within any promise, & you see no reason to believe, only you have the Lord's call and command to believe ; do you now in conscience and obedience to this command, or to God's invitation and intreaty in the gospel, believe, because thou darest not dishonour God by refusing his grace ? thou dost therefore accept of it, this is no presumption, unless obedience be presumption ; nay, the most acceptable obedience, which is the *obedience of faith*, Joh. 6. 38. For what was the ground on which those three thousand believed ? *Acts 2. 38, 39, &c.* Peter said, *Repent that you may receive remission of sins* ; now what follows ? *they that gladly received the word, baptized* : O that word, repent, i. e. as Beza expounds it, return to God and come in, was a most sweet word to them, and therefore they received it ; this was no presumption, either for Peter to exhort them to repent, or for them to take the Lord (as that godly man said) at his first word. I know there is a subjection to the gospel arising only from slavish fear and carnal hopes, *Psal. 66. 3. & 18. 44.* this may be in presumptuous reprobates,

reprobates; but there is a subjection arising from the sense of the sweetness and exceeding goodness of God's call and promise, *Psal. 110. 2, 3.* As a woman that is overcome with the words of her loving suiter, the man is precious, and hence his words are very sweet, and overcome her heart to think, why shoule such a one as I be looke upon, by one of such a place; it is no presumption now, but duty to give her consent: so it is here; when the Lord is precious and his words [O accept me, O come to me] are exceeding sweet, and here-upon out of obedience gladly yields up it self to the Lord, takes possession of the Lord; this is no more presumption, than to sanctify a sabbath, or to pray, or hear the word, because the Lord's commands are herein very sweet.

3. If repentance accompanies faith, 'tis no presumption to believe; many know the sin, and hence believe in Christ, trust to Christ, and there is an end of their faith; but what confession and sorrow for sin, what more love to Christ follows this faith? truly none; nay their faith is the cause why they have none; for they think, if I trust to Christ to forgive them, he will do it, and there is an end of the business. Verily this hedge faith, this bramble faith that catches hold on Christ, and pricks and scratches Christ by more impenitency, more contempt of him, is meer presumption, which shall one day be burnt up, and destroyed by the fire of God's jealousy. Fie upon that faith that serves only to keep a man from being tormented before his time. Your sins would be your sorrows, but that your faith quiets you. But if faith be accompanied with repentance, mourning

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for sin, more esteem of God's grace in Christ, so that nothing breaks thy heart more than the thoughts of Christ's unchangeable love to one so vile, and this love makes thee love much, and love him the more ; as thy sin increaseth, so thou desirest that thy love may increase, and now the streams of thy thoughts run, how thou mayest live to him that died for thee. This was *Mary's* faith, who sat at Christ's feet weeping, washing them with her Tears, and loving him much, because much was forgiven ; who though she was accounted a presumptuous woman by *Simon* ; and Christ himself suffered in his thoughts, for suffering of her to come so near unto him ; yet the Lord himself clears her therein, and justifies her before God and men : many a poor believer thinks, If I should believe, I should but presume, and spin a spider's web of faith out of my own bowels : and hence you shall observe, this not believing stops up the work of repentance, mourning and love, and all cheerful obedience in them ; and on the contrary, if they did believe, it would be with them as themselves think many times, If I knew the Lord was mine, and my sins pardoned, Oh how should I then bless him, and love him, and wonder at him ! how would this break my heart before him ! &c. Now I say, let all the world judge, if that which thou thinkest would be presumption, be not rebellion, because it makes thee worse, and stops up the spirit of grace in thee. Whereas that faith which lets out those blessed springs of sorrow, love, thankfulness, humbleness, &c. what can it be else but such a saying faith as is wrought by the

spirit, because it lets in the spirit more abundantly into a dry and desolate heart.

2. The subject or matter of faith.

This is the second thing in the description of Faith, the soul of and humbled sinner is the subject or matter of faith. I do not mean the matter out of which faith is wrought, (for there is nothing in man out of which the spirit begets it) but that wherein faith is seated. I mean also the habit of faith, not the principle of it; for that is out of man in the Lord Jesus, who is therefore called *our hope*, as well as *our strength*; the soul therefore is the subject of faith, called *the heart*, Rom. 10.9. compared with Mat. 6. 21. for we cannot go or come to Christ in this life with our bodies, we are *here absent from the Lord*, 2. Cor. 5. but the soul can go to him, the heart can be with him, as the eye can see a thousand miles off, and receive the species or image of the things it sees into it, so the soul enlightened by faith, can see Christ afar off, it can long for, choose, and rest upon the Lord of life, and receive the lively image of Christ's glory in it; 2 Cor. 3. ult.

If Christ were present upon earth, the soul (not the body) only could truly receive him; Christ comes to the elect only by his spirit, and hence our spirits only are fit to receive him and close with him; thousands hear Christ outwardly, that inwardly are deaf to all God's calls, their spirits see not, taste not, feel not; it is therefore the soul that is the subject of faith: and I say it is an *humble empty* soul which is the subject; for a full, proud, broken spirit cannot, nay will not receive Christ, as we have proved; and therefore Luke 14.

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the servant is commanded to bid the *poor, halt, and blind, and lame to come in*; they would not make excuses as other did: they that were stung to death with fiery serpents, were the only men that the *bräsen serpent* was lifted up for them to look upon, and to be healed, John 3. 14. and therefore the promise doth run, *If any man lack wisdom let him ask it, but if any man want wisdom, Jam. 1. 5.* so if any man want light, want life, want peace, pardon, want Christ and his spirit, let them ask, and the Lord will give, away with your money if you come to these waters to buy, and take freely; *If any man would be wise, let him be a fool,* (saith the blessed apostle) an empty nothing; a soul in a perishing, helpless, hopeless condition, is the subject of faith; such only feel their need of Christ, are glad at the offer of Christ, and therefore such only can and will receive Christ, and come unto Christ by faith: and truly if we had but hearts, the consideration of this might be ground of great comfort and confidence unto all God's people, whose souls come unto Jesus Christ, for that which was in *Thomas*, John 21. is in all men naturally, if we could see Christ with our eyes, and feel him with our hands, and embrace him (as *Mary* did) with our arms, if we could hear himself speak, we could then believe as they said, *if he will come from the cross,* so we say, if he will come down from heaven thus unto us, we will then believe; if we wanethis we fear we may be at last deceived, because we want sense, and cannot come to close with our eyes and hands the objects of our faith; but Oh consider this point, we are made partakers of Christ's life, & salvation by him, *Act 10. 43.*

only yet certainly by faith. Now this faith is not by seeing him with our eyes, coming near to him with our bodies, but coming to him with our souls; the soul is the seat of faith. Now this you may do, though you never thus saw him, *whom though you see not, yet believing you rejoice, 1 Pet 1. 8.* this coming of the soul to Christ, doth make a firmer union between thee and Christ, than if thou wert bodily present with him in Heaven. For many touched and crowded him, that never were truly united to him, or received virtue from him. If our souls were in the third heaven with Christ, who of us would then doubt of our portion in him? I tell you if your souls go out of sin and self, unto Christ Jesus, and there rest, this makes you nearer to him, than if your souls were under his wing in the highest Heavens. The poor Sea-man when he is near dangerous shores, when he cannot go down to the depth of the sea to fasten his Ship, yet if he can cast his anchor twenty or forty fathom deep, and if that holds, this quiets him in the sorest storms; when we are tossed and cannot come to Christ with our bodily presence, yet if our souls can come, if our faith our anchor can reach him, and knit us to him, this should exceedingly comfort our hearts.

Object. How, and where should my soul come to Christ, who is now absent from me?

Ansⁿ. Christ comes to you in his word and covenant of grace, there is his spirit, his truth, goodness, love, faithfulness; receive this, you receive him; embrace this, you embrace him; as among our selves, you see great estates are conveyed and surrendred by bond and writings.

2. 41. When they received the word, they received Christ, John 15. 7. If my words abide in you, i. e. If I abide in you by my words, you shall be fruitful.

By the word let thine eye pitch upon the person; do not only account the promise true, but with Sarah, Heb. 11. 11. account him faithful who hath promised; and then let thy heart roll it self upon that grace and faithfulness revealed in this word, lean upon the breast of this beloved: and thus the soul by the chariot wheels and wings of the word, is possessor of Christ in it, and carried up to Christ's cross, as dying, Gal. 3. 1. and from thence to his glory in his kingdom by it, Heb. 10. 19, 22. As a man that gives a great estate by some writing to us, we believe it as if he were present; and by this we do not only believe the writing to be true, but the man to be faithful and loving to us; and hereupon our hearts are carried after the man himself, though afar off from us. Thus we ascend to Christ in the cloud of faith; as Jacob, though he could hardly believe, yet as soon as he was persuaded Joseph was yet alive, his spirit presently revived, and it was immediately with him, before his body came to him: so 'tis with faith; the soul goes unto Christ, before our bodies and souls both together shall have immediate communion with him.

3. The form of faith.

This is the third thing in the description of faith; the coming of the whole soul out of it self unto Christ is the form of faith, and that wherein the life and essence of it consists, and which doth difference it from all other graces of the spirit. The first act of faith, as it unites us to Christ, is

not assurance that he is mine, but a coming to him with assurance, that hereby he is become mine. Come unto the waters, and so buy wine and milk, Isai. 55. 1, 2. i. e. now make them your own. The weary and heavy laden shall not have rest, unless they come to Christ for it, Mat. 11. 28. Faith doth nothing for life, (for that is the law of works) it only receives him who hath done all for it, it comes out of all it hath or doth, (like Abraham that left his servants behind him, when he went up to God in the mount) unto Christ for life. Conceive it thus ; Adam had a principle and stock of life in himself, in his own hand, and therefore was to live by this, to live of himself, and from himself, and therefore had no need nor use of faith ; he lived by the law of works ; which the apostle sets in a direct opposition to the law of faith ; but Adam being now fallen, hath lost his life, and became not like the man that fell among theives betwixt Jerusalem and Jericho, stript, wounded, and half dead, but wholly dead, Eph. 2. 1. so that let any man seek life from himself, it's impossible he should live : for if there had been a law that could have given life, our righteousness should have been thereby, Gal. 3. 21. Hence it follows, if any man will have life, he must go out of himself to another, viz. the Lord of life for it, John 5. 40. and 6. 27, 28, 29.

Now observe it, this very coming, this very motion of the soul to Christ, (a grace which Adam neither had, nor had power to use) is faith ; the spirit of Christ moving or drawing the soul, the soul is thence moved, and so comes to Christ, John 6. 64, 65. The soul by sin is exalted from God. and

and turns his back upon God ; the turning or coming of the soul (not unto duties of holiness, for that is obedience properly, but) unto God, in Christ again, is properly and formally faith. All evil is in man's self, and from himself ; all man's good is in Christ, and from Christ. The souls of all God's elect, seeing these things, forsake and renounce themselves, in whom & from whom is all their evil, & come unto Christ, in whom & from whom is all their good. This motion of the soul between these extremes, through that vast and infinite distance that is between a sinful wretched man & a blessed Saviour, is faith ; for by faith principally we pass from death to life, John 5. 24. The soul of a poor sinner wounded and humbled ; sometimes knows not Christ, and then crys out, as those, Acts 2. 37. *What shall I do ? Whither shall I go ?* sometimes dares not, sometimes cannot, it hath no heart to stir or come, it therefore looks up, and longs, and goes unto the Lord to draw it, like poor Ephraim, Jer. 31. 18. *Oh turn me Lord and then I shall be turned*, Lam. 5. 21. and this is lowest and least degree of faith. But at some other time, the soul mourning for want of the Lord, the Lord comes unto it with great clearness, glory and sweetness of grace & peace ; and hence the soul cannot but come and close with him, and cry *Rabboni*, and say, Oh Lord, is it thy good pleasure to have respect to such a clod of earth, to tender such riches of grace to one so unworthy, and to bid, nay to beseech me to come and take ? Lord behold I come : this is faith, Would you have a proof of it ? Consider therefore these particulars, 1. Consider these scriptures :

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John 6. 35. *I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.* Where you see coming to Christ and believing in Christ are all one. So John 7. 37. *In the last day of the feast the Lord Christ crys out with much vehemency, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* Now in the next ver. 38. our Saviour expounds this coming; for saith he, *H_e that believeth on me, out of his belly, &c.* So to come to Christ, as upon this to drink in of Christ's fulness, is believing in Christ. So Heb. 11. 6. the apostle faith, *Without faith it is impossible to please God;* and then in rendering the reason of this, explains what he meant by faith, *viz.* to be our coming unto God, upon a double testimony, believing first that he is, secondly, that he is a rewarder of them that seek him diligently, or (which is all one) who do come unto him. So John 1. 12. *So many as received him, (which is all one with coming) he adopted them as sons, even to them that believe in his name.* And hence we shall observe, that the scripture doth not attribute our righteousness and life to our believing of Christ, but to our believing on Christ, in Christ, (a phrase peculiar to heavenly language, and therefore not found in any humane writer) because it is not the bare believing of a testimony that saith us, unless we so believe it, as to believe in Christ which cannot be but by coming to him, and as it were in him, or into him, our union with Christ being made compleat hereby.

2. That upon which the Lord promised life, and salvation, and mercy, cannot be works, but faith, Gal. 3. 22. Heb. 11. 6. but throughout all the old and new testament, the Lord promiseth life

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and salvation to commers, or to them that return,
Jer. 3. 12. Ex. 33. 10, Joel 2. 12, 13. Heb. 7. 25.
John 5. 40.

3. If unbelief be nothing else but a departing from God, faith can be nothing else but a coming unto God: but that is the nature of unbelief, *Heb. 3. 12. and 10. 38. Joh. 6. 64, 65, 66, 67, 68. 69. and 12. 37, 38, 39, 40.* The Lord's great plot is to gather all his elect under the wings of Christ, *Mat. 23. 37. Eph. 1. 9, 10.* and therefore calls them to come under them by the voice of the gospel. The coming under them therefore can be nothing else but faith, the proper obedience to the gospel, as works are under the voice of the law. Thus faith is the coming of the soul to Christ. But you will say, Did not many come to Christ that were never saved by him?

Yes, many came to him with their bodily presence, that were excluded from him, *John 6. 36.*

But you will say, Do not many mens souls come, are not many mens hearts moving towards Christ, and yet excluded from Christ? Do not many cry, Lord, Lord? are not many enlightened and taste of this heavenly gift, and yet fall away? I confess 'tis very true; and therefore it is set down in this description of faith, that it is the coming of the whole soul unto Christ. Never did any yet come to Christ and receive him with their whole souls, with all their hearts, but they had fruition of him, and blessedness by him; faith therefore is not the coming of the soul, but the coming of the whole soul unto Jesus Christ; and this you may be established in upon these grounds.

1. The scripture expressly calls for this, Prov. 3. 5. *Trust in the Lord with all thy heart*, Acts 8. 37. *If thou believest with all thy heart thou shalt be saved*. Joel 2. 13. *Turn unto the Lord with all your hearts*, Jer. 29. 13. *You shall find the Lord when you seek him with your whole hearts*. As when we have a great gift to bestow, and we ask a poor man to whom we intend to give it, whether he will accept of it or no? Yes, saith he, with all my heart; so 'tis here, the Lord asks those he intends to bestow his Son upon, and saith to them, You have lived thus long without him, and thus long abused him, will you now have him, and accept of him? Yes Lord with all my heart; this is all the Lord requires. Doth the Lord require no more of me, but to come? Lord, this voice is most sweet, I come with all my heart, I come.

2. Because Christ is worthy of the whole heart, all must be sold away to buy this field, this treasure, Mat. 13. 44. *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me*. A filthy lust, a base harlot hath had thy whole heart, and dost thou think the Lord Christ will have it divided? is not one heart too little for him? are not ten thousand souls too few to embrace him, or cleave to him?

3. Because without this your coming to him is but feigned, Jer. 3. 10. *They return to me not with their whole heart, but feignedly*. To cleave to Christ and a lust, to Christ and a proud heart, cannot be unfeigned faith, to go to your lusts in time of peace, and fly to Christ in times of extremity, is damnable hypocrisy. When conscience troubles you, you then go to Christ to ease you, and when your

your unruly wills and lusts trouble you, you go to the world to ease you, and so your hearts are divided, and you come not wholly and only unto Christ for it. Believe it, it is such a faith by which you may, as *Samuel* did on *Saul's* garment, take hold of him, but the Lord will never take hold of you. Set a branch in the stock, if it stays loosely in it, it will wither in time; and this is the great cause of withering christians, and of so many apostates in these evil times. Those that came to Christ, *John* 6. and followed him for a time, but afterward fell away, *ver. 66.* what was the reason of their fall? *viz.* when they were offended at Christ, they knew whether to go from Christ; but what faith *Peter*? *Lord, Whither should we go?* *ver. 68.* If you lay the pipes that are to convey water from a full fountain, but one foot, or one inch short of it, there cannot be any water derived from thence. Oh beloved, what is the reaon, that many a man's faith doth him no good, derives no life, spirit, blood, efficacy, peace, power from the Lord Jesus? is it because Christ is a dry Christ, and unwilling to communicate? No, no, the wound is in their faith, that pipe is laid but half way to him, they fall one foot short of him, their souls come, but their *whole* souls do not come to him, and hence they never reach Christ; they lie not in Christ, and therefore receive not from Christ, Christ is precious, (here their souls come) but not exceeding precious, *preciousness* it self, as the word is, *1 Pet. 2. 7.* (here the whole soul doth not come) they cleave to Christ, and rest upon Christ, (here their souls come) but they cleave

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not to Christ only, *Psal 62. 5.* (thus their whole souls do not come)

4. If the whole soul by unbelief departs from God, then the whole soul must return and come again unto God.

5. If the want of this be the great cause why men are rejected of God, then the whole soul must return to him : but this is the cause why all men under the means are rejected of God. *Israel would none of me, Psal. 81. 12, 13, 1, e,* would not be content alone with me, would not take quiet contentment in me, (as the Hebrew word signifies) the Lord was not good enough for them ; but their hearts went out from him to other things, & therefore the Lord gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels. The woman that forsakes the guide of her youth, and sets her heart as much upon other men as her husband, is an adulteress, for which only she shall have a bill of divorce.

6. Because as the gospel first reveals Christ to the mind, and then offers him to the will ; so faith which runs parallel with the gospel, first sees Christ, (there the mind, one part of the soul, goes out) then receives Christ gladly, (there the other part, the will, goes out) and so the whole soul comes to Christ. The gospel comes to all the elect, first in great clearness and evidence of the truth of it, *1 Thes. 1. 5.* to which the understanding assents, and is persuaded of ; secondly, in great grace and goodness, surpassing beauty and sweetness, *Lam. 3. 24.* with which the will is drawn, and so the whole soul comes unto Christ : for the gospel is not only true, but glad tidings to all the elect,

elect, especially when humbled at God's feet, *I Tim. I. 15. in whom saith the apostle, Eph. I. 12, 13.* you believed, after that ye heard the word of truth, (there is the object of the understanding) the gospel of your salvation, (there is the goodness of it, the object of the will) so that the whole soul is drawn to Christ in the work of faith. He that understands how *liberum arbitrium* may be in two faculties, must not wonder, if one grace be seated in both faculties of understanding and will; no grace can be compleatly seated in divers faculties, but gradually, and imperfectly it may; the work of faith is not compleat, when the understanding is opened only to see and wonder at the mystery of mercy in the gospel; but when the will adheres and clasps about that infinite and surpassing good it sees, then it is perfected and not before, *John 6. 40.* And this is the reason why saving faith (as it is called) doth not look only to a bare testimony and assent unto it, as humane faith doth; because in the gospel not only divine truth is propounded to the mind to assent unto; but an infinite and eternal good is offered to the heart and will of man to embrace, and thence it is that it is not sufficient for a christian to believe God or to believe Christ, but he must also believe in him, or else he cannot be saved; the object of believing of him being *verum*, or truth; the object of the second, *bonum*, or good: take heed therefore a poor lost sinner, undone in its own eyes for ever, not knowing what to do, unless it be to lie down, and lie still at God's feet as worthy of nothing, but hell; what doth the Lord now do? the Lord Christ by his gospel first lets in a new light, and

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it sees the Lord Jesus there bleeding before its eyes, and held forth as a propitiation to all that believe, to all that come to him ; the mind sees this mystery, this exceeding rich grace and free mercy, and thinks happy are they that share in this mercy, but will the Lord look upon such a nothing as I ? can such infinite treasures be my portion ? the Lord therefore calls and bids him come away and enter into the possession of it : Thy sins indeed are great, saith the Lord, yet remember, blood-thirsty *Manasseh*, persecuting *Paul*, was pardoned ; nay remember my grace is free, for whose sake I invite thee : I beseech thee to come in, thy wants indeed are many, yet remember that thou hast therefore the more need and more cause to come, and that it is I that have made thee empty and poor on purpose, that thou mightest come : it is true, I have an eternal purpose to exclude many thousands from mercy, yet my purpose is unchangeable, never to cast off any that do come for it ; I never did it yet, I will not do it unto thee, if thou dost come : it is true many may presume, yet it is no presumption, but duty to obey my great command ; and it is the greatest sin that ever thou didst, or canst commit ; now to reject it, and refuse this grace : come therefore poor, weary, lost, undone creature. Hereupon the heart and will come, and rest, and roll themselves upon these bowels, and there rest, thus the whole soul comes, and this I say again is faith. Just as it is with the load-stone drawing the iron, who would think that iron should be drawn by it ? but there is a secret virtue coming from the stone which draws it, and so it comes and is united to it ;

it; so who would think that ever such an iron heavy earthy heart should be drawn unto Christ; yet the Lord lets out a secret vertue of truth and sweetness from himself; which draws the soul to Christ, and so it comes.

May not the consideration of this be of great consolation to those that want assurance, & therefore think they have no faith? Oh remember that if thou comest unto Christ, as that poor woman, of Canaan, she had no assurance she should be helped of Christ, nay Christ tells her to her teeth, that he would not *cast children's bread* to such *dogs*, yet she came to him, and looked up to free mercy, and claspt about him and would not away; you will say, Was this faith? - yes, our Saviour himself professeth it before men and angels, *Oh woman great is thy faith*, Mat. 15. 28.

So I say unto all you poor creatures whom the Lord hath humbled, and made vile in your own eyes, unworthy of childrens bread as dogs; yet you look up unto, and rest upon mercy with your whole heart; this is precious faith in the account of Christ.

Object. But how shall I know when the whole soul comes to Christ?

Ans^w. When the eye of the soul so sees Christ, and the heart so embraceth and resteth upon Christ, as that it resteth in Christ, as in its portion and all-sufficient good: many rest upon Christ that do not rest in him, that is, that are not abundantly satisfied with him; and hence their souls go out of Christ to other things to perfect their rest, and so their hearts are divided between Christ and other things; O fear this faith the

apostle, lest there being a promise left us of entring into his rest, any of you fall short of it, Heb. 4, 1. for (saith he) *we that have believed do enter into rest*, ver. 3. So say I to you ; of all delusions, fear this, lest when you come to Christ, and rest upon Christ for life and salvation, that you rest not in Christ : *I tell you*, saith Christ, to those that came to him, and were constant followers of him, Joh. 6. 53. *Except you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, you have no life in you* ; what is this eating and drinking ? verily, sipping and tasting is not properly eating and drinking, tasting your meat will not satisfy you, and therefore will not nourish life in you ; to eat and drink Christ is to receive him, as to satiate and satisfy the soul with him : to quench all your desires, your hungring and thirsting in him ; until thy soul faith, as he did in another case, *it is enough that Joseph lives*, so Lord I have enough now I have this love, this grace of Christ to be my portion ; now you rest in Christ. For if there be some great good a man enjoys, if there be any good wanting in it, it is not possible that his whole heart should be set upon it : *ex. gr.* A man hath food, but if he wants cloaths, and his bread will not cloath him, his whole heart will not be set upon his food, but upon that which may cloath him also : so on the contrary if there be an eminent good, wherein he finds all in one, no good out of it, that is wanting in it ; it is certain that the whole soul is carried after this good ; so it is here, when the soul so comes to Christ, as that it comes for all good to him, and so finds all good in him, that he now only supports the sinking soul,

soul, verily the whole soul is now come, because as it felt before it came all wants and evils out of him, so now it finds all fulness in him, and whither should the whole soul be carried but after such a good? when the Lord calls to the soul to come and take all with nothing, take all or nothing. And hereupon it comes and drinks, as it is *John* 7. 37. satisfying it self there and professing, Lord I now desire no more, I have enough. Oh brethren, what faith there is among men at this day I cannot tell, but this I am sure was *Abraham's* faith, *Gen.* 17. 1. and *David's* faith, *2 Sam.* 23. 5. and *Peter's* faith, *John* 6. 68. and *Paul's* faith, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. *Gal.* 6. 14. When the soul thus rests upon the rock Christ, *the gates of hell may avail*, but never prevail against such a one; he that hath set the whole world at his heels, and sold himself out of all this pearl, and this abundantly recompenceth all his losses, such a one hath Christ his own, and shall never be deprived of him again; the Lord never gives his elect any rest out of Christ, that they may find rest at last in Christ. When thus the soul is entered into rest, the whole soul is drawn here, and this is the great reason why many men famous in their generations and times in the eyes of others for faith; yet rotten at the heart, and thence turn apostates, one proves covetous, another ambitious, another voluptuous, another grows conceited, another grows contentious, another grows formal. What is the reason of this? verily they did rest upon Christ, but did never find rest in Christ, and therefore their whole soul never came to him; Christ after some time of possession grew a dry and common Christ unto them.

them, though at first they wondred at him, and he was very sweet unto them ; and hence they departed from him, as from an empty dry pit in summer time, where they found nothing to refresh them : but the Lord Jesus carries it towards all the faithful ; as *Elkanah* did towards *Hannah* ; though she was in a fit, much vexed and troubled for want of children, yet because he loved her exceedingly dearly, he quiets her again with this, *Am not I better unto thee than ten sons ?* So though they may be unquiet for some odd fits for want of many things, yet because Christ loves them, he brings them back unto their rest, saying, *Am not I better than all friends, all creatures, all abilities, all spiritual and created excellencies ;* and hereby they find rest to their souls in him again.

Object. But is there any Believers heart so knit unto Christ but that there is a heart also after other vanities ? do they find such rest in him, as that they find no disquietness ? is there not an unregenerate part and much unbelief remaining ? is any man's faith made perfect that the whole soul must come, or else there is no true faith ?

Ans^w. It is true, there is an unregenerate and a regenerate part in a godly man, but not *a heart and a heart* (the note of a wicked man in scripture phrase) there are disquietings in the hearts of saints after that they be in Christ, even *Solomon* himself may sometime seek out of Christ for rest in his orchards and gardens, knowledge and wisdom ; yet there is a great difference between these that are in the saints arising from the unregenerate part, and those that be in the wicked, arising from *a heart and a heart, or a double heart* ;

heart ; and this difference is chiefly seen in two things

1. A double minded man, who hath a double heart, makes not a daily war against that heart which carries him away from resting only in Christ : for Christ quiets his conscience, and the world comforts his heart. Christ gives him some rest ; and because this is not full, his heart runs out to the creature, and to his lusts for more ; and so between them both he hath rest, and he is quieted with this, because he feels what he sought for : and therefore he must needs have Christ, else his conscience cannot be quiet, and he must needs have his lusts, his ease, and this world too, else his heart is most unquiet ; but let him have both, he is now quiet, *Micah 3. 11. The priests teach for hire* (there the world quiets them) yet *they will lean upon the Lord too*, because this also comforts them ; what do they now do ? do they make war against this woful frame ? No, no, but bless themselves in it, saying, *No evil shall come to us* ; but a poor believer whose heart is upright, it is true, there are many runnings out of his heart after other vanities, and much unquietness of spirit, yet the regenerate part makes war against these, as God's enemies and the disturbers of the peace of Christ's kingdom. *Psal. 42. David professeth, his tears were his meat day and night, ver. 3. and his heart was wofully sunk and fallen, yet what doth he ? first he chides himself ; Why art thou cast down, oh my soul ? and then secondly he makes his mone to the Lord of it, ver. 5, 6. Lord my soul is cast down, Oh Lord pity me ; you shall see also, Psal. 73. 2. his eyes were dazled with the glory of the world and the*

the wicked in it, that he had almost forsaken God ; yet within a little while after he gets into the *sanctuary of God*, and then loaths himself for such brutish and foolish thoughts, and closeth with God again, saying, *Whom have I in heaven or earth but thee*, ver. 25.

2. All the out-runnings of the hearts of the faithful and their disquietness of spirit thereby, make them to return to their rest again, and give them the more rest in the conclusion : *David* was a bird out of his nest for a time, and therefore when he considered how the Lord had *saved his eyes from tears, his soul from hell*, returns again, and *faith Return to thy rest, Oh my soul* ; Psal. 25. 13. it is said, *his soul shall dwell at ease*, or (as the word signifies) *shall lodge in goodness* ; some hard work full of trouble, some strong lust, or sad temptation, desertion, affliction, the Lord exerciseth the soul with all for some time, and so long as the soul is in heaviness and much weariness of spirit, as it is, 1. Pet. 1. 6. yet when this day's work is done, when the sin is subdued, and the temptation hath humbled him, then the believer's soul shall lodge in goodness ; he shall have an easy bed, and soft pillow to rest on at night ; when have the faithful sweeter naps in Christ's bosom, then after sorest troubles, longest eclipses of God's pleased face ? when do their souls cleave closer to the Lord, than when they are ready to forsake the Lord, and the Lord them ? Certainly fire is wholly carried upward, when that which suppresseth it, makes it at last break out into greater flame ; *Peter* falls from Christ, yet he is *Peter*, a stone cleaving most close unto Christ, aboye all other the apostles, because

cause his fall being greater, his faith clave the closer to the Lord Christ for ever after it: *Solomon's heart* certainly never clave so unseparably unto the Lord, as after his fall, wherein he did more experimentally find and feel the emptiness and vanity of those things, wherein he did imagine before something was to be found; but he that hath a double heart, never enters into rest, but the longer he lives, the more common Christ, his truth, and promises grow; they are but fading flowers, whose beauty and sweetnesse affect him for a time; but they wither before the sun set: and therefore the longer he lives, the less favour he finds in these things, and therefore takes less contentment therein; the Lord Jesus and all his Ordinances grow more flat and dry things to him, and therefore though at first he might rejoice (as *John's hearers, John 5. 35.*) in these burning and shining lights; yet it is but for a season; at last he discovers himself, not by a renewed returning to his rest, but by a wearyish forsaking of it.

The raven never returned to the ark again, because it could live upon the floating carrion on the waters; whereas the dove finding no rest there, returns again.

Fourthly, the end of faith.

This is the fourth particular in the description of faith: The whole foul cometh to Christ, *For Christ and all his benefits*; and this is the end of faith, or of a believer's coming unto Christ: the end of faith is sometimes exprest by a general word *life, John 5. 40.* but you must remember that hereby is meant the Lord of life first, and so all the blessings of life. The falleness and hypocrisy

criy of Christ's followers appeared in this, John 6. 26. *you seek me*, saith Christ, *for loaves*, that was their end ; as many a one in these days if they be in outward misery, seek unto Christ for outward mercy, corn in time of famine, health in time of sickness, peace upon any terms in time of war ; and if they be in any inward distress, now they seek to Christ for comfort & quiet, & so like many sick patients desire the physician, not to have him married to them, but for some of his physick only, to be healed by him : - but what saith our Saviour to these persons, ver. 27. *Labour not for the meat that perisheth*, what should be the end of their labour then ? he tells them, *but for that bread that endures to everlasting life* ; what is this bread ? see the 33, 35, & 48 verses, he tells them, *I am the bread of life* ; seek for me therefore, come for me ; & look as none can have life from the bread, unless he first feed upon the bread it self, so none can have any life or benefit from Christ that comes not first to Christ for Christ. Conceive of this thus : God in Christ is the compleat object of faith under a double notion ; First, as sufficient, in being all we want unto us ; Secondly, as efficient, in communicating all to us, and doing all for us. In the first respect, he is *Elshaddai*, in his promise ; in the second respect, he is *Jehovah*, Exod. 6. 3. in making good his all-sufficient promise ; hence faith comes to him for a double end, first that he would give himself and be all to it ; secondly that he would communicate all his blessings and the benefits also, and so do all for it. For in the covenant of grace, the Lord doth not only promise a new heart, pardon of sin, with the

the rest of those spiritual benefits, but also himself, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Hence faith comes first for that which the Lord principally promiseth, *viz.* God himself, and then for all the rest of those heavenly and glorious benefits; and hence it is, if any man come for Christ himself without his benefits, and regard not the conveyance of them, as the Familists at this day do; who abolish all inherent graces, and some of them all ordinances, because Christ is all to them; or if any come for the benefits of Christ without Christ himself, as many among ourselves do, who never account themselves happy in him, but only by some abilities they receive from him; neither of these come with a single eye, nor fix a right end in their closing with Christ: you must first come for Christ himself, and so for all his benefits.

For establishing your hearts in which truth, consider these things.

1. Consider what drives any man to Christ. Is not sense of wants one main thing? now what are a christian's wants, when the Lord hath humbled him? are they not, first, want of Christ; and secondly, of all the benefits of Christ? *viz.* righteousness, peace, pardon, grace, glory, *John 16. 9.* If therefore the souls of all the elect feel a want of both, doth not faith come to Christ for both? *John 4. 10.* *If thou knewest the gift of God, (i. e. the worth of him, and thy want of him) thou wouldest ask, and he would give thee water of Life.*

2. What doth the Lord offer in the gospel? is it not first Christ himself, and then all the benefits of Christ? *Isai. 9. 6, 7, To us a Son is born, to us a Son*

Son is given ; in the receiving therefore of Christ by faith, what should the soul aim at, but that it may have the Son himself, and so all his benefits with him?

3. Can any man have eternal life, that not only hath not the benefits flowing from the Son, but that wants the Son himself? I am sure the apostle expressly affirms it, 1 John 5. 12. *He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son hath not life*: Faith therefore must come for Christ himself: as in marriage the woman consents first to have the man, and so to have all other benefits that will necessarily follow upon this,

4. The happiness of all the saints consists in two things: First, union to Christ; Secondly, communion with Christ. Faith therefore pitcheth first upon Christ himself, that it may have sure and certain union to him (for our union is not unto any of the benefits flowing to us from Christ; we are not united unto forgivness of sins, nor peace of conscience, nor holiness, &c. but unto the person of the Son of God himself) and then secondly, cometh, for the communication of all the benefits arising only from union; as Paul, Phil. 3. 9, 10. *esteems all things dung and loss, first, to be found in him, that so he might have his righteousness in justification, and feel the power of his death and resurrection in sanctification, &c.* In one word, faith first buys the pearl it self, and then seeks to be enriched by it; it finds the treasure of grace, glory, peace, mercy, favour, reconciliation in Christ, but then buys the field it self, that it may have the treasure also, Mat. 13. 44. The Lord Christ's great desire is, that all his might be with him

to see his glory, John 24. 17. and faith desires first to have him, and be for ever with him, *and so to partake of that glory*: the Lord's great plot is first to perfect the saints in Christ, Col. 2. 10. *Ye are compleat in him*; then to make them like to Christ by communicating life, grace, peace, glory from him, Col. 3. 3, 4. 1 John 3. 1, 2. Faith therefore first quiets its self in him, then seeks for life from him; it comes first for Christ, and then for all the benefits of Christ.

Oh that this truth were well considered, how would it discover abundance of rotten counterfeit faith in the world, some seeking for peace and comfort, and catching at promises without seeking first to have the person of Christ himself: *in whom only all the promises are yea and amen*. Others despising the benefits of Christ, especially grace, holiness, and life from him: because (say they) *Christ is all in all* to them. Ask them, have you any grace, change of heart, &c? tush! what do you tell them of repentance, and faith, and holiness? they have Christ, and that is sufficient; they have the substance, what should they do now with shadows of ordinances, ministeries, or sacraments? they have all graces in Christ, why should they look either for being of or evidence from any grace inherent in themselves? they have a living holy head, but Christ's body they say is a dry skeleton, a dead carcass, and they are but dry bones; and is it so indeed? then look that God should shortly bury thee out of his sight; assuredly you that want and despise the benefits coming from him, shall never have part nor portion in him at the great day of account; *Christ is a Saviour* -

our to save men from their sins ; not to save men and their sins ; Christ is king, and priest of his church, holy and separated from sinners, Heb. 7. 26. and if you have any part or portion in him, he hath made you kings and priests also to God and this Father, and hath not left you in your pollution, ~~but washt you from it in his own blood~~, Rev. 1. 5, 6. *The law of God is written on the heart of Christ*, Psal. 40. 8. with Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7, and if ever he wraps you up in the covenant of grace, he will write his ~~law~~ in your hearts also, Heb. 8. 10.

Let all deluded Familists tremble at this, that in advancing Christ himself, and free grace, abolish and despise those heavenly benefits which flow from him, unto all the elect. Let others also mourn over themselves, that have with much affection been seeking after Christ's benefits, peace of conscience, holiness of heart and life, promises to assure them of eternal glory, but have not sought first to embrace and have the person of the Lord Jesus himself.

Oh come, come therefore unto the Lord Jesus for Christ himself, and for all his benefits; I say for all his benefits. This is that which the apostle prays for with bended knees for the Ephesians, Eph. 3. 14. 18. that they might (not take in a little, but) comprehend the height, depth, length, breadth of Christ's love, that so they might be filled with all the fulness of God. This is that which our Saviour expressly with much vehemency calls for, John 7. 37. Let all that thirst come unto me and drink ; not sip and taste a little, as reprobates and apostates do, Heb. 6. 4, 5 : but drink and drink abundantly, as it is said, 5. 1. And observe it, that upon these very terms the Lord

Lord tenders grace and mercy, Rom. 5. 17. the apostle doth not say, *They that receive a little, but abundance of grace, shall reign by righteousness unto eternal life.* Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it, Psal. 81. 11, 12. And most certainly this is one principal difference between the faith of the elect and the reprobates, (and if I mistake not, the principal) the elect close with Christ for that end, for which the Father offers him, which is, that they might possess his Son, and all his benefits, and therefore come poor and empty, for all ; the reprobate come not for all, but for so much and no more than will serve their own turn ; in misery they would have Christ to deliver them, but what care they for spiritual mercies ? in trouble of conscience, or after their soul falls into filthy lusts and sins, they come to Christ to forgive them and comfort them, but what care they for holiness and a new nature ? some sins they would have Christ save them from, but they regard not redemption from all ; they cannot come to Christ, that all the powers of darkness may be perfectly subdued, that their own sins, and selves, conceits, and wills, may be led away captive by this mighty conqueror ; that Christ in all his authority, grace, peace, life, glory, might be for ever advanced in them and by them.

It was *Austin's* complaint in his time of many of his hearers, that *Christum assequi*, to have Christ was pleasing to them ; but *sequi Christum*, to follow Christ, this was heavy. To close with Christ's person, is sweet to many ; but to close with his will, and to come to him that he would give them a heart to lie under it, this benefit they desire not.

All Christ is useless and needless ; but something from Christ is precious to them : for the Lord Jesus sake, beloved, take heed of this delusion ; if any thing have been bought for us at a dear rate, and cost much ; if the man should offer to hold any part of it back, we will not abate him any thing, we will have it all, because it cost dear ; I tell you pardon of sin, peace with God, the adoption of Sons, the spirit of grace, perseverance to the end, the kingdom of glory, the riches of mercy, have been bought for you by a dear and great price, the precious blood of Christ ; and therefore if the justice of God should hold back any thing, or thy own belief tell thee these are too great and many for so vile a creature as thou art to enjoy, yet abate the Lord nothing ; say thou art vile, yet Christ's blood that bought not some, but all these, is very precious, and therefore take them all to thy self, as thy portion for ever, and *bless the Lord*, as *David* doth, *Psal. 16. 7. that gave thee this boonsel.* Whiles you are in peace, it may be you may neglect so great salvation ; but the time of distres and anguish may come wherein you may feel a need of all, even of those hidden depths of mercy above your reach and reason ; and therefore, as bees gather in your honey in summertime, and with *Joseph* lay up in these times of plenty, wherein the exceeding riches of grace is opened and poured out at your heels, for those times of approaching famine, and for those many years of spiritual desertion and distress, wherein you may think, can it stand with the honour of God to save such a poor sinful creature as I am ? what iron heart is not drawn by this love, for the Lord

to invite you to possess *all* or *nothing*? *Dives* in hell was desirous of a drop to coole his tongue, and behold the very depths and seas of grace are opened for thee to come in and partake of, if the Lord Jesus should be offered unto thee to pardon some sins, but not all; to pardon all sins, but not to heal thy nature also; or to heal some backslidings, but not all; to supply thy spiritual wants, but not outward also, as may be best for thee; or to supply outward, but not inward and spiritual; if he should offer to do thee good in this life, but not in death nor after death, you might refuse to come in; but when all is offered, all that mercy, which no eye ever saw to pity thee; all that love wherewith *Abraham*, *David*, *Paul*, &c. were embraced, now to refuse to come up and possess these; how can you escape the sorest vengeance of a jealous God, that neglect so great salvation? Oh Lord! what extremity of anguish and bitterness wilt thou one day be in, when the contempt of this grace, glowing upon thy conscience, shall press thee down with these thoughts, I am now under all misery, but I might have had *all* God's grace, *all* Christ's glory, but wretch that I am, I would not. Methinks if your own good hereby should not draw you, yet the exceeding great glory the Lord shall have thereby, should force you to accept of all this grace; for if thou didst receive a little grace, believe a little mercy toward thee, this makes thee sometime exceeding thankful, doth it not? and the very hope of more makes thy heart break forth into a holy boasting and glorying in Christ, *Who is a God like unto thee?*

Suppose therefore you drank in all, and received all that which the Lord freely offers, shall not the Lord be exceedingly magnified then? couldst thou contain thy self then, without crying out, *Oh Lord now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen, and my soul hath now possession of thy salvation?* wouldst not call to the hills, and seas, and earth, and heavens, and saints, and angels, to break forth into glorious praises, and bless this God.

Object. But what have I to do to come, that am so poor, and empty, and full of woes, and wants, and sins? never was any so miserable, and blind, and naked as I.

Ans^w. If faith cometh for all to Christ, and fetcheth all from him, then never be discouraged because thou hast nothing to bring unto him; let all thy wants and miseries be arguments & motives therefore to come unto him, *Rev. 3. 17, 18. Because thou art poor and naked, nay because thou knowest it not, and art not affected with it, therefore come unto me, and buy eye-salve, and gold, and white raiment, Psal. 25. 11. Lord pardon my sin, saith David, because it is great: have mercy upon me, for I am consumed with grief, and am in trouble, Psal. 31. 9. Let mercy and truth continually preserve me, for innumerable evils have compassed me round about, Psal. 40. 11, 12. Let us return unto the Lord, because he hath wounded us, Hos. 6. 1, 2. I am a dog, therefore let me have crumbs, said the woman of Canaan: Oh this is cross to sense and reason, and we cannot believe while we are so exceeding poor, empty, vile, that the Lord should look upon us; but beloved, you little think what wrong you do to your selves, and*

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the Lord Jesus hereby : for by this means Christ is not so much exalted, nor the creature humbled, both which concurring in faith, make those acts of faith most precious ; for while you stand upon something, and would have something to bring to Christ, you hereby exalt your selves ; but when you come with sense of nothing else but woes and wants, and see Christ now making of you welcome, Oh this is not only mercy, but ravishing mercy. If you should come with sense of somewhat to Christ, and to see his love to you ; you might glorify mercy in the heighth, and length, and breadth of it, but not in the depth of it, unless you see it reaching its hand to you, when you are fallen into so low and poor a condition as nothingness and emptiness, and misery it self. And therefore do not come to Christ only for the benefits of the covenant, but for the condition of it also, when you feel a want of faith it self, as Hezekiah did, *Isai. 38. 14. Lord I am oppressed, undertake for me.* *1 Kings 8. 57, 58. Do not undertake to fulfil any part of the covenant, or any condition in it, or any duty required of thee, of thy self, but go empty to Christ, and say as David, Lord I will run the ways of thy salvation, if thou wilt set my heart at liberty, Psal. 119. 32, 33. Quicken me, and I will call upon thy name, Psal. 80. 18.* Be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might, but not of thine own.

Objet. 1. But I come for all, and am never a whit the better, but as poor and miserable still as ever I was.

Answ. If the Lord keeps you poor and low, yet the same motive that made thee come, let it make thee

thee stay ; it may be the Lord sees thou wouldest grow full and lifted up if he should give thee a little, and therefore keeps thee low ; better be humble than full and proud. *Let us go unto the Lord, because he hath wounded, broken, and slain us, Hos. 6. 2, 3.* But they might object, We do come, but find no help, no cure. It may be so ; yet it is said, *After two days he will revive us, and the third day we shall live in his sight, and we shall know him, if we shall follow on to know him, ver. 6.* His goings forth are prepared as the morning, it may be night for a time, but the sun of righteousness will arise gradually and gloriously upon thy soul.

Truly brethren, when I see the curse of God upon many christians that are now grown full of their parts, gifts, peace, comforts, abilities, duties ; I stand adoring the riches of the Lord's mercy to a little handful of poor believers, not only in making them empty, but in keeping of them so all their days ; and therefore come to the Lord poor, empty, naked, nothing, cursed in the sense of their want of all things, for all things, & then receive with gladness, yet boldness and holy confidence, not only pardon of some sins, but of all ; believe, answer not to some prayers, but all. Embrace in thy bosom not some few promises, but all. It is a great ease of conscience, when may a christian take a promise without presumption as spoken to him, and given to him in particular ? and the rule is very sweet, but certain : when he takes all the scripture & imbraceth it as spoken unto him, he may then take any particular proper promise boldly ; my meaning is, when a christian takes hold and wrestles with God for the

the accomplishment of all the promises of the new testament, when he sets all the commands before him, as his rule and compass and guide to walk after, when he applies all the threatenings to drive him nearer unto Christ the end of them ; this no hypocrite can do, this the saints shall do, and by this may know when the Lord speaks in any particular to them ; go I say again therefore unto the Lord for all, and in the sense of all your emptiness be abundantly comforted, that though you do not find supply from Christ, yet you come unto the Lord Christ for it : it is a certain rule, you shall not alway want that good which you come to Christ to supply, nor alway be mastered with that sin which you come to Christ with, to take away : only then be sure you come for *all* ; otherwise you do not come truly : come first for Christ himself, and then (as I said) for *all* his benefits.

To conclude ; this is the direct and compendious way of living by faith, so much urged and pressed of God's servants : for to live by faith properly is to live upon the promise in the want of the thing, or to apprehend the thing in the promise, *Heb. 11. 1.* now the promises are not given to the elect immediately without Christ, but first Christ is given, *i. e.* offered in the gospel and received by faith, and then with him all things also : and therefore the scripture runs thus, *Isai. 55. 1, 2, 3. 4.* *Come unto the waters and drink, and then I will make an everlasting covenant,* (which contains all the promises) *even the sure mercies of David :* the apostle expressly disputes the case, and faith, *Where there is a testament, (containing evangelical*

gelical promises) there must first be the death of the testator, Heb. 9. 15, 16. to whom we must first come by faith, before we can have right to any promise, Heb. 7. 22, 25. and 10. 16, 17, 18, 22. Being justified by faith, now we have peace with God, nay we have access to God, nay now we are of sure standing, now we hope in and glory to come; Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. all follows the first.

How shall a christian therefore live by faith? truly, first receive Christ and come to him for the end I mention; and then thou mayest be sure all other things shall be given to thee. As for example: dost want any temporal blessing? suppose it be payment of debts, thy daily bread, provision for thy family, a comfortable yoak-fellow, look now through the scripture for promises of these things, and let thy faith act thus: If God hath given me Christ, the greatest blessing, then certainly he will give me all these smaller matters as may be good for me; but the Lord hath given me Christ, and therefore I shall not want, Psal. 23. 1. *The Lord is my Shepherd*, saith David: what follows? *I shall not want*: there is the like reason in all other things, suppose it be in care of protection from enemies, if the Lord hath given me Christ to save me from hell, then he will save me from these fleshly enemies much more: you shall see, *Isai. 7.* a promise given that *Syria should not prevail against Judah*; they doubted of this, how doth the Lord seek to assure them? you shall see, ver. 14, it is by promising *a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and his name shall be Emanuel*; this is a strange reason, (yet you may see the reason of it if you consider this point) so *Isai. 9. 5, 6.*

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The oppressors rod shall be broken. For unto us a son is born, a son is given. By faith they put to flight the armies of Aliens, brake down the walls of Jericho, did wonders in the world. What did they chiefly look to in their faith ? you shall see, Heb. 11. 39, 40. it was by respecting the promise to come, and that better thing Christ Jesus himself, which we now see with open face, and therefore he concludes, Heb. 12. 1, 2, 3. Having such a cloud of witnesses, that thus lived and died by faith, let us look unto Jesus the author and finisher of ours. The prophet Habakkuk, Hab. 2. 5. affirms, that the Just shall live by faith ; what faith is that ? consult with the place, you shall see it was in the promise of deliverance from the Chaldean tyranny, yet the apostle. Paul applies it to faith in Christ's righteousness, and that truly, because if their faith had not respected Christ himself, in the first place, they could never have expected any deliverance by the promise of deliverance from the Chaldeans, but thus they might.

5. The special ground of faith.

The last thing in the description of faith is, that the soul thus comes upon the call of Christ in his Word ; and this is the special ground of faith, wherefore the soul comes to Christ : take a sinner humbled and broken for sin, he cannot prevent the Lord by coming of himself unto Christ, and therefore the Lord prevents him, by his gracious call and invitation to come in ; *Whom God hath predestinated, them hath he called*, Rom. 8 30. our translation from darkness into God's marvellous light is by being called. The soul is lost in humiliation, the Lord Jesus who is to come to save that

that which is lost, seeketh it out in vocation, or calling, 1 Pet. 2. 9. Sanctification is the restoring of us to the image of God we once had in *Adam*, as corruption is the defacing of that image, vocation is the calling of the soul unto Christ, this voice *Adam* never heard of; he did not need any call to come to Christ, and therefore was immediately sanctified, as soon as he was made: but we need vocation unto Christ, before we can be sanctified by Christ; we need this call to make us come to Christ, to put us into Christ, and therefore much more before we can receive any holiness from Christ; the ground of our coming by faith is God's call, 2 Thes. 2. 13, 14. *Chosen to salvation through sanctification, (the remote end of vocation) and belief of the truth, (the next end of it) whereunto he hath called you there is the ground of it.*

The explication of this call is a point full of many spiritual difficulties; but of singular use, and comfort to them that are faithful and called, I shall omit many things, and explicate only those things which serve our purpose here in these three particulars.

1. I shall shew you what this call is, or the nature of it.
2. The necessity of it.
3. How it is a ground of coming, and what kind of ground for faith.

1. The nature of this call I shall open for your more distinct understanding in several propositions, or theses.

Our

Our vocation or calling is ever by some word or voice, either outward, or inward, or both ; either ordinary or extraordinary ; by the ministry of men, or by immediate visions and inspirations of God. I speak not now of extraordinary call, by dreams and visions, and immediate inspirations, as in *Abraham*, and others, before the scriptures were penned and published : nor of extraordinary call, by the immediate voice of Christ ; as in *Paul* and some other of the apostles : for these are ceased now, *Heb. 1. 1.* unless it be among people that want ordinary means, and elect Infants, &c. whose call must be more than by ordinary means, because they want such means ; we speak now of ordinary call by the ministry of men.

2. This voice in ordinary calling home of the elect to Christ, is not by the voice of the law, (for the proper end of that is to reveal sin and death, and to cast down a sinner) but by the voice of the gospel bringing glad tidings ; written by the apostles, and preached to the world. He hath called you by our gospel, 2. *Thes. 2. 14.* These things are written that you might believe, *Joh. 20. 31.* By the foolishness of preaching, the Lord saves them that believe, *1 Cor. 1. 21.* with 26. I mean preaching at the first or second rebound, by lively voice, or printed sermons at the time of hearing, or in the time of deep meditation, concerning things heard ; the spirit indeed inwardly accompanies the voice of the gospel, but no man's call is by the immediate voice of the spirit without the gospel, or the immediate testimony of the spirit breathed out of free grace without the word, *Eph. 1. 12, 13.*

Q

And

And therefore that a christian should be immediately called without the scripture, and the scripture only given to confirm God's immediate promise, as a prince gives his letter to confirm his promise made to a man before ; (as *Valdeffo* would have it) is both a false and a dangerous assertion.

3. This voice of the gospel is the voice of God in Christ, or the voice of Jesus Christ, although dispensed by men, who are but weak instruments for this mighty work sent and set in Christ's stead ; but the call, the voice is Christ's ; its the Lord's call, *Rom. 1. 6.* It is certain some of the messengers of Christ called the Romans by the gospel, yet *Paul* saith, *They were called by Christ Jesus, that had bear his voice and arise and live,* *John 5. 29.*

2 *Thes. 2. 12, 13.* and when 'the time of calling comes, they listen to it as his call : and hence it stiled, *Heb. 3. 1.* because the Lord Christ from heaven speaks, takes the written word in his own lips, as it were, *Cant. 1. 1, 2.* and thereby pierceth through the ears, to the heart, through all the noise of fears, sorrows, objections against believing, and makes it to be heard as his voice ; the bowels of Christ now yern towards an humbled lost sinner, bleeding at his feet, therefore can contain no longer, but speaks and calls, and makes the soul understand his voice : so that this call is not a mean busines, because the Lord Jesus himself now speaks, whose voice is glorious.

4. The substance of this call, or the thing the Lord calls unto, is to *come unto him* : for there is a more common calling (or as some term it a particular calling) of men, as some to the *masters* or *servants*, *1 Cor. 7. 24, 20, 21.* or to *office in church*

or

or common-wealth, as Aaron, Heb. 5. 4. and the voice there is to attend unto their work to which they are called. There is also a remote end of vocation, which is to *holiness*, 1 Thes. 4. 7. and unto *glory* also, 2 Thes. 2. 14. Phil. 3. 14. but we now speak of more special calling, the next end of which is to come unto Christ, the soul hath lived many years without him, the Lord Jesus will now have the lost prodigal to come home, to come to him: the soul is *weary and heavy laden*, and the Lord Jesus could easily ease it without its coming to him: but this is his will, he must come to him for it: Mat. 11. 27. Jer. 3. 7, 22. *I said after she had done these things, Turn unto me, come unto me ye back-sliding children, and I will heal your back-slidings*, Jer. 4. 1. *If thou returnest, return unto me*. This voice, *Come unto me*, is one of the sweetest words that Christ can speak, or man can hear, full of majesty, mercy, grace, and peace; a poor sinner thinks; Will the Lord ever put up such wrongs I have offered him, heal such a nature, take such a viper into his bosom; do any thing for me? If there be but one in the world to be forsaken, is it not I? the Lord therefore comes and calls, *Come unto me and I will pardon all thy sins, I will heal all thy back-slidings, I will be angry no more*, Jer. 3. 12, 13. *Though thou hast committed whoredom with many lovers, yet return unto me saith the Lord*, Jer. 3. 1. Though thou hast resisted my spirit, refused my grace, wearied me with thine iniquities, yet come unto me and this will make me amends; I require nothing of thee else but to come, Isai. 55. 1, 2. for God's call is out of free grace, Gal. 1. 6. and therefore

fore calls for no more but only to come up and possess the Lord's fulness, *Luke 14. 17.* *1 Cor. 1. 9.*

5. This call to come, is for substance all one with the offer of Christ; which consists in three things.

1. Commandment to receive Christ as present and ready to be given to it: as when we offer any thing to one another, it is by commanding them to take it: *John 4. 23.* and this binds conscience to believe, as you will answer for the contempt of this rich grace, at the great day of account.

2. Perswasion and intreaty to come and receive what we offer: *2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.* for in such an offer wherein the person is unwilling to receive and we are exceeding desirous to give, we then perswade; so doth Christ with us.

3. Promise; to offer a thing without a promise of having it, if we receive it, is but a mock-offer; and hence you shall find in scripture some promise ever annexed unto God's offer, which is the ground of faith, *Jer. 22.*

6. This call or offer hath three special qualifications: first, it is inward as well as outward, for the Lord calls thousands outwardly who yet never come, because they want an inward call to come; an inward whispering still voice of God's spirit: and therefore it is said, *He that hath heard and learned (not of man only, but) of the Father cometh unto me,* *John 6. 45.* The Lord doth not stand at the outward door only and call to open, but the Lord Jesus comes in, he comes near unto the very heart of a poor sinner makes that understand, *Hos. 2. 14.* and the Lord makes his grace glorious, and his mercy sweet unto the hearts of his elect; look (faith the Lord Jesus) how I have left

left thousand thousands in the world, and have had greater cause so to have left thee ; but behold I am come unto thee, Oh come thou unto me.

2. It is a particular call ; for there is a general call and offer of grace to every one, *Mark 16. 15.* Now though this be a means to make it particular, yet the spirit of Christ which is wont to apply generals unto particulars particularly, makes the call particular, that the soul sees that the Lord in special means me, singles out me in special to believe ; otherwise the souls of the elect will not be much moved with the call of God, so long as they think the Lord offers no more mercy to me than to any reprobate ; and therefore the spirit of Christ makes the call particular, *Isai. 43. 1. I have called thee by name ; John 10. 5. He calleth all his sheep by name* ; not that the Lord calls any by their christen name (as we say) as the Lord did extraordinarily call *Samuel, Samuel, and Paul, Paul*, but the meaning is, look as the Lord from before all worlds writ down their names in the book of life, and loves them in special ; so in vocation (the first opening of election) the Lord makes his offer and call special, and so special as if it were by name ; for the soul at this instant feels such a special stirring of the spirit upon it, which it feels now, and never felt before ; as also its particular case so spoken unto, and its particular objections so answered, and the grievousness of its sin in refusing grace so particularly applied, as if God the only searcher of hearts only spake unto it, and so dares not but think and believe that the Lord meaneth me.

3. It is effectual as well as inward and particular, *Luke 14. 33. Compel them to come in, Joh. 10. 16.*

Q. 3. Christ's

Christ's other sheep shall hear Christ's voice, and those he must bring home; for every inward call is not effectual. There came a man in without his wedding garment, Mat. 22. 6, 7, 8. whence our Saviour faith, *Many are called but few chosen*; but this I now speak of, as a *calling out of purpose*, Rom. 3. 28. and therefore never leaves the soul, until it hath real possession of Christ, and rests there; this call falls upon a sinner humbled, not hard hearted; and hence the call is effectual, Mat. 9. 12, 13. 2 Chro. 30. 10, 11. It is such a call as was in creation, Rom. 4. 17. And hence the soul cannot but come, and when 'tis come it cannot depart, like Peter, *Lord, whither should we go?* and therefore though it hath never so many objections in coming to Christ, never so much weakness or heartlessness to close with Christ, yet the Lord brings it home, and there keeps it, and now it infinitely blesseth God that ever the Lord gave it an eye to see, an heart to come and seek after Jesus Christ. 2. Thus much of the nature of this call, now follows the necessity of it, which appears in these three particulars.

1. No man should come unless first called; as it is in calling to an ordinary office, so 'tis in our calling much more unto special grace; the apostle saith Heb. 5. 4. that *No man takes this honour, but he that is called of God*; so what hath any man to do with Christ, to make himself a son of God, and heir of glory thereby, but he that is called of God? what have we to do to take other mens goods, unless called thereto? what have we to do to take the riches of grace and peace, if not called thereto?

thereto? 'tis presumption to take Christ whiles uncalled, but not when you are called thereunto.

2. Because no man would come without the Lord's call: Mat. 20. 6, 7. *Why stand ye here all the day idle?* The answer was, *No man hath hired, or called us thereto.* When there is an outward call only, yet men will not come in, Mat. 23. 37. and therefore there must be an effectual call to bring men home, Isa. 55. 5. and therefore you shall see many, let there be a legal command, suppose to sanctify a sabbath, or to speak the truth; they have no objections against obedience unto this: but press them to believe, shew them God's call for it, they have more fears and objections rising against this than there be hairs on their head: because the soul would not close with this:

3. Because no man could come, unless called: John 6. 44. *No man can come unto me, unless the Father draw him;* and how doth the Father draw any man but by this call? if the Lord should not come and speak himself, and make his call, the most joyful tydings and the sweetest message that ever came to it, it would say, I have no heart, I cannot, I am not able, for Rom. 11. 32. *We are shut up under unbelief;* and therefore the Lord Jesus, Luke 15. 5. must bring his sheep home upon his shoulders, else it will lie in the wilderness of its own droopings; whereas when the Lord effectually speaks, the soul cannot but come.

3. Lastly, How this call is a ground of faith, and what ground of faith:

For answer hereunto, I do not make this call considered without the promise, the ground on which faith

faith rests, (for that is God's free grace in the promise) but the ground by which it rests, or wherefore it rests upon the promise. The mind sees (1) The freeness of mercy to a poor sinner in misery ; and this breeds some hope the Lord may pity it. (2) The fulness and plenteous riches of mercy, and this gives very great encouragement to the soul to think : the Lord (if I come to him) surely will not deny me a drop, *Psal. 130, 7, 8.* The prodigal comes home because of bread enough in his father's house, though he was not certain he should have any. (3) The preciousness and sweetness of mercy makes the soul long vehemently for it, *Psal. 36. 6, 7.* and makes it set all other things at a low rate to enjoy it, but when unto all this the Lord sends a special commandment, and a special message on purpose, and calls it to come in, and accept of it, and take mercy as its own, and that for no other reason, but because it is commanded and called to accept of it ; this puts an end unto all doubts, all fears, all discouragements, and the soul answers as those, *Jer. 3. 22.* *Behold we come, thou art the Lord our God.* As a man in great want of bread, one comes and freely offers him bread to preserve his life, the man takes it ; if you ask him, Why do you take it ? you are a poor fellow unworthy of it, never did yet one hour's work for it : he answers, 'Tis true, I am unworthy, but yet because it is offered to me to preserve life, I gladly take it ; the man doth not promise absolutely to me, that this bread is mine, and shall feed me ; but he tells me, if I do receive it, it shall certainly be mine to feed me ; and this is the main ground of his receiving of it. Just so.

it is in faith ; ask an humbled sinner, why do you believe ? why do you take Christ as your own ? hath the Lord said absolutely that he is yours ? No, saith the soul, but the Lord freely offers himself unto me, who am undone without him, and faith, if I do receive him, he shall be for ever mine, to give life to me, and therefore I thankfully accept of him ; this is the ground of faith. The scripture sets out this in a lively similitude of a great Supper, to which many were *invited* ; what was the ground of their coming to it ? Behold, all things are ready if you come and eat, they are not yours if you do not come ; but if you come at my call and invitation, then all things shall be yours, *Luke 14. 17.* And hence it is that they that came not, were excluded ; they that came were received with welcome.

I know 'tis a question of some difficulty among some, *viz.* Whether an absolute testimony of actual favour and justification be not the first ground of faith ? They that make faith to be an absolute assurance of God's favour, must of necessity maintain this assertion, and then these things will follow.

1. That a christian must be justified before he believe ; for the cause of faith must go before faith. This proposition, *Thou art justified, reconciled*, is according to this assertion the cause of faith ; for no proposition can therefore be true, because we are perswaded that it is true, but it must first be true, before I am perswaded of it ; the wall is not white because my eyes see it so, but it must first be white, then I see it so. Now to make actual justification before faith, is *gross* to the whole current of scripture.

scripture. *We believe that we might be justified*, Gal. 2. 16. *we are not justified that we might believe*, *We pass from death to life by faith*, John 5. 24. *We are not in a state of life before faith*, *When the Lord Jesus saw their faith*, Mat. 9. 2. he then said, *Be of good comfort: thy sins are forgiven thee*. The word *faith*, *He that believeth not is condemned already*, John 3. 18. and therefore (unless the spirit's witness be cross to the word) it doth not say to one that believeth not, that he is absolved already. *To be justified by faith*, and to be *justified by Christ's righteousness*, is all one in the scriptures phrase & meaning, Gal. 2. 16, 17. And therefore we may as well say that we are justified before and without Christ, as before and without faith. And indeed this doctrine of being justified by faith, and by this means to have remission of sins, the apostle Peter affirms to be the doctrine of all the prophets, Acts 10. 43. *To him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believe in him, shall receive remission of sins*: not that they had remission of sins before they did believe. I know not any one protestant writer that maintains our justification before and without faith, except learned Chamier; who not knowing how to avoid the blow of Bellarmine's horned argument, that if faith be an assurance of our actual justification, then we are first justified before we believe; he affirms we are justified before faith: and therefore that when the scripture saith *we are justified by faith*, the reason of that (saith he) is not because our faith do efficere *justificationem*, i. e. is a cause (meaning instrumental) of our justification, but because *efficitur in justificare*, i. e. is wrought in a justified person: but if that be the reason

reason of the phrase, we may affirm our justification to be as well by love, and sanctification, and holy obedience, as by faith, because these are wrought in a justified person also.

2. Then no man's ministry, nor the doctrine delivered by the faithful ministers of Christ from out of the scriptures, can be any ground of faith, for before faith no minister of Christ can say to any man in particular, or any men in general, that they are already justified, and reconciled, and therefore believe it ; but to deny that doctrine which is opened out of the scriptures by the ministers of Christ, to be the ground of faith, is expressly cross to the testimony of scriptures, and the end of the ministry, and the messengers of Christ, who have the keys of office given to them, that *what they bind on earth, is bound in heaven ; what they loose on earth, is loosed in heaven ; whose sins they remit, they are forgiven, whose sins they retain, they are retained*, Mat. 16. 16. John 20. 23. Most excellent for this purpose is the apostle's dispute, Rom. 10. *You need not go up to heaven, nor down to hell, to fetch Christ himself to tell you whether you shall be justified and saved, ver. 6, 7. for the word is nigh them, ver. 8.* that opens Christ's heart unto thy heart : But what word might some say is this ? Is it not the internal word of the spirit only ? The apostle answers, *It is that word which we preach : hereby you shall know whether you shall live or no ; but what is that word Paul preached ? is it not an absolute testimony that all your sins are already pardoned by Christ, and therefore believe it ? No, but if thou believest with thine heart that God raised up Christ from the dead, thou shalt be saved, ver. 9,*

11. 12. What can be more full ? yet consider that one place more, John 17. 20. *I pray for all them that shall believe on me, through their word.* What is the ground or means of believing in Christ ? It is said here expressly, *Their word* : Is it not the word of Christ, rather than the word of the apostles and of their successors, in the doctrine they delivered, is it their word ? Truly that which they delivered, was the word of Christ, and that which is opened from their doctrine in the scriptures is the word of Christ, yet as they open it, and apply it, so 'tis their word : and this word is the ground by which all that Christ prays for, do believe in Christ ; the bare word I grant cannot perswade without the spirit, yet the spirit will not give ground to faith without the word, but as by it, so upon it, will build the souls of all the elect, who are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone, Eph. 2. 20. *How can they believe without a preacher,* Rom. 10. 14.

3. Then when wicked men and reprobates are commanded to believe, (as they are commanded, John 3. 19. Luke 14. 17. John 6. 38. Heb. 4. 2.) they are commanded to believe a lie, *viz.* that their sins are pardoned, and they actually justified ; for if this testimony be the ground of faith, then when they are commanded to believe ; they are commanded to be perswaded of this testimony. But the sins of wicked men, especially reprobates are not, nor never shall be forgiven, and therefore this cannot be the ground of faith.

4. When the spirit of adoption, which witnesseth that God is our Father, and that we are his

his sons reconciled to him, goes before faith ; but the apostle expressly denys this, *Ye are the children of God by faith*, Gal. 3. 26. *And because ye are sons he hath sent unto you the spirit of sons, crying Abba Father*, Gal. 4. 6.

5. If such a testimony should be the first ground of faith, then no man should believe but he that hath such a testimony antecedent to his faith ; but this is cross to the scripture Isai. 50. 10. *He that sits in darkness, and sees no light, let him stay himself upon God*. When *Jonah* is cast out of God's sight to his own feeling, yet he is bound to look again unto the temple.

6. This absolute testimony is either the testimony of the word, or of the spirit ; not of the word, as is proved ; if of the spirit, then let it be considered, whether that can be the testimony of the spirit which is not according to the word, nay contrary to the word, for the word to say none are justified before faith ; for the spirit to testify some are justified before faith. If it be said, that the spirit doth not witness these to any man before and without faith ; but yet it is without respect unto, or shewing a man his faith, (for those that excludes sanctification from being any evidence, they mean faith as well as any other renewed work of holiness, and so exclude that also) then I say the testimony of the spirit (which of it self is exceeding clear) is an obscure and dark testimony, because it clears up the prædicte of this proposition, *thou believer art justified*, it witnesseth to a man *thou art justified* ; but clears not up the subject of it : viz. *thou believer*, it makes a man believe a testimony without understanding the

full meaning of it ; for the spirit testifying to any man *thou art justified* ; his meaning is, *thou believer art justified*. And I do beseech the God & Father of all lights, that his poor people may be led into the truth in this particular ; for want of establishment here, you little think how many delusions you may fall into about your spiritual condition ; I remember that when satan came to overthrow the faith of Christ, in his second temptation, *Mat. 4. 6.* he brought a promise out of the scriptures to him because he saw he held close to them, *ver. 4.* and by this promise sought to lead him into temptation ; how so ? observe the text, and see if it was not by hiding part of the meaning of the promise from him, and in special, that very condition required in the person to whom the promise is made ; for he tells him, that if he *cast himself down headlong*, the *Lord hath not only said it, but writ it* ; *he shall give his angels charge over him, so keep him from dashing his foot against a stone* : whereas if you consult with the place whence it is cited, *wiz. Psal. 91. 11.* the condition is set down, *in all thy ways*, which he purposely hides from our Saviour as much as in him lay, Oh take heed therefore of receiving any testimony from word or spirit without the meaning of it, without knowing the person thus and thus qualified, to whom it belongs ; otherwise satan will hurry you headlong to a world of delusions ; and you shall find the word of God appointed to direct you, (thro' your mis-application of it) the word of satan, to deceive and damn you : do not think that this is building faith upon works ; but to believe, that they that believe in Christ are justified, reconciled, and

and saved, is building faith upon God's promise; yea, and his free promise too: for faith the apostle, *It is of faith, that it might be of grace, Rom. 4. 16.* It is believing to have the end by the means, not the end without the mean of faith. It is true, we may see God's favour and love to us in the cause as well as in the effects of sanctification; but what is that cause? the meritorious cause is Christ's righteousness, and the instrumental cause of applying this, is our faith; so that as we are justified by faith, so seeing this, we may say assuredly with Paul, *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, Rom. 5. 1.* It is true, we cannot see our justification by faith, nor the work of faith without the shining of the spirit into our hearts; but the question is not whether the spirit helps us to see our justified estate, but by what means; by what proposition in the word we come to see it; which we may say is not by any such absolute testimony: thou art justified already, and therefore believe; but if thou believe and come to Christ, here is then pardon of sin, peace with God, yea all the blessings of Christ ready for thee, which God intends to give and never to take away, if thou thankfully receive what God freely offers, and as it were lays down at thy feet. The call of Christ therefore is the ground by which we first believe; and that you may be confirmed farther herein, do but consider the glory and excellency of this ground.

1. It is a constant ground of faith, for if you come to Christ because you have assurance, or because you feel such and such graces, and heavenly impressions of God's spirit in you, you may

then many a day and year keep at a distance from Christ, and live without Christ ; for the feeling of graces, and assurance of favour are not constant ; but this call is alway sounding in thine ears, *Oh come*, not only because thou seekest holiness in thee, but come, because poor, hungry, empty, naked, lost, blind, cursed, forsaken, full of sin ; there is not one moment of the day of grace, but the Lord beseecheth thee to receive his grace, 2 Cor. 6. 1, 2, 3. this is an open door to Christ at all times, an open harbour to put in at in all storms, a heart-breaking word : Oh thou tossed with tempests and not comforted, come unto me and thou shalt find rest to thy soul. Many ask, How should I come to Christ, seeing that I have no promise belonging to me ? what have dogs to do with childrens bread ? be it so, yet God's call, command, beseechings to come in, should be ground unto thee, to come ; as a poor beggar, that hath no promise absolutely given him of relief, yet if a rich man sends to him, and bids him come to the door and wait, he thinks he hath good ground and warrant to come.

2. It is a sure ground against all fears, all doubts of presumption, all sense of unworthiness and of the greatness of the good promised, &c. For the saints have many fears whereby they dare not come, they fear they may presume, they see themselves most vile, and unworthy of the least smile ; the benefits are so exceeding great, to which they are called, that they think it is too good for them, &c. But beloved, when the soul sees evidently, the Lord invites me, persuades me, commands me, waits for me, striveth with me that I would come in,

in, and because his grace is free, therefore requires no more but only to come and take, come and drink: this forceth the soul to confess, I am sure it is no presumption to obey the call of Christ; and what though I am unworthy, and this good is exceeding great and precious, yet if it be the Lord's grace to call such a poor wretch to receive and accept of it, why should I not rather thankfully receive it, than out of my own head superstitiously refuse it? but this I am sure and certain of, the Lord calls me thus to do; if God should speak from heaven to you to come unto his Son, it is not so sure a ground as the call of God from out of the oracle of his word, in the blessed gospel of his dear Son.

3. It is a strong ground, and of great power and efficacy to force the soul to come; for you may object, no man can believe, or should believe, and come of himself. I say so too; but how would you have the spirit of Christ enable you to come? verily, it is by this call, and therefore, *Jer. 3. 22*, when the Lord said; *Return ye back-sliding children*, they presently answered, *Lord we come;* *the dead shall hear this voice of the Son of God, and live;* *John 5. 25.* *Thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart answered, Lord thy face will I seek.* Oh iron, stony, adamantine heart, who canst hear so sweet a voice as this word come, and yet not be overcome!

4. This call honours grace more for what more free then for the Lord to say, *Come and take of the water of Life freely?* what more free, than for a rich man to enquire of his debtor only to receive so many thousands of him to pay his debts, and

to set him up again? Verily brethren, as the Lord honours his grace by commanding us to come, so we honour it, when through the mighty power of the same call we do come.

Thus much for explication of this call; now let me put an end to it in a word of application.

Use. Let this perswade all sorts of persons, young and old, one and another to whom the gospel is sent, to come into Jesus Christ; for those that God calls should come: but the Lord calls (at least outwardly) all sorts of persons; nay every individual person to come in: *Mark. 16. 15, 16.* Paul told the stout jaylor, *If thou believest thou shalt be saved:* and look as the law speaks particularly to every man; *Thou shalt have no other Gods, &c.* so doth the gospel also, *Rom. 10. 9.* that so every man might look upon himself as spoken to in particular. And indeed if there were not such a particular call, then men should not sin by refusing the gospel, nor should the Lord be angry for so doing, but their sin and *condemnation* is great that so do, *John 3. 19.* And the Lord is more *wroth* for this sin than any other; *Psal. 2. 12. Luke 14. 18. Heb. 3. 10, 11, 19.* In one word, either the Lord would have thee (who ever thou art) to receive Christ, or to reject, and so despise Christ; and if the Lord would have you reject him, he would then have you sin, and continue in it, which cannot stand either with the honour of God's Holiness, or of his rich grace; I shall therefore open two things,

1. Set down means to enable you to come.
2. Shew you how and in what manner you should come.

The means.

1. Consider, who it is that doth call you ; is it man or ministers think you ? you might never come then ; no, it is Jesus Christ himself that calls you by them : Why do many discouraged spirits refuse to come ? it is because they think deceitful men, or charitable men call them, but the Lord hath no respect unto them ; Oh foolish conceit ! I tell you their ministry is not an act of their charity, wishing well to the salvation of all, but it is an act of Christ's love and sovereign authority, *Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20.* So that what they do, it is in Christ's stead, *2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.* if Christ was present, he would call thee to him with more bowels than any compassionate Minister can : and I assure you, to receive them, is to receive Christ ; to despise them, is to despise Christ, *John 13. 20.* and therefore *Eph. 2. 14.* although the apostles preached to the *Ephesians*, yet it is said, that Christ came and preached to them. *If any Minister preached any other doctrine of grace than what Christ hath delivered, let him be accursed :* but if they publish his mind and his call, look upon them as if the Lord himself called unto you, lest the Lord curse you, and all their ministry to you ; the Lord Jesus did not cast off the Jews for crucifying of him and shedding his blood, until the gospel of grace published by his messengers, came to them, and that was rejected ; then *Paul waxed bold, and said, Because you put away the word from you, we leave you ;* *Acts 13. 46.*

Oh beloved, if you did believe Christ called you poor prodigals (that have run riot, and sinned against him as much as you could) home unto him ; suppose

suppose Christ was present, would it not draw you in? suppose he was with thee in the chamber, where thou art crying after him, or in the church, where thou art waiting for him, and he should appear visibly before thine eyes, open his bosom, and bowels, and blood before thee, and calling unto thee to this purpose, I do beseech thee and intreat thee by all these tears I have shed for thee in the days of my flesh, by all those bitter agonies I have suffered for thee, by all these tender bowels which have been rowled together toward thee, come unto me, embrace me, lay thy wearied head in this blessed bosom of mine, crucify me no longer by thy sins, tread me not under foot by thy unbelief any more; and I will pardon all thy sins though as red as crimson, I will heal thy cursed nature, I will carry thee in my own bowels up to glory with me, where all sins and tears and sorrows shall be abolished, &c. who would not now come in to him? let me see that man that hath a heart of adamant that would not melt and come in at this; Oh my beloved, this very call is done as really by Christ in his ministers now, though not so visibly and immediately as I now describe, and therefore take heed how you refuse to hear him that speaks from heaven, Heb. 12. 25.

Consider whom the Lord calls and that is *thee* in particular, whoever thou art, to whom the gospel of Christ is sent: for if you think Christ calls some only that are so and so deeply humbled only to come, and not unto you in particular, you will never come in; but we have proved this, that the Lord calls all in general, and consequently each

each man in particlar, the consideration of this may bring you in ; men fear to commit murder and steal, &c. but you fear not unbelief ; but the apostle bids you fear that, *for the gospel is preached (faith he) unto you, as well as unto those that fell by unbelief*, Heb. 4. 1, 2. Do not say he calls me indeed, but it is no more than what he doth to reprobates ; true, in the outward call it is so ; yet upon this ground you may think the Lord commands not, calls not you, to sanctify a sabbath, or to honour God's name, because this is as common to reprobates as unto you ; do not say I am not able to come, and therefore I am not called ; no more are you able to attend the rules of the moral law : yet you look upon them as appertaining to you, and because you cannot do them, you intreat the Lord to enable you, and so because you cannot come, you should look up to the Lord to draw you : and verily many times the great reason why the Lord doth not draw you, is, because you do not deeply consider that he doth really affectionately call you : do not say, I am a dry tree, the Lord cannot look upon me, whose condition is worse than ever I heard or read of ; yet remember the Lord speaks to such, *Isai. 65. 39* 4, 6, 7. Look not thou to thy barren and dead heart, but give glory unto God, as Abraham did, *Rom. 4. 19, 20.* and receive his grace with more thankfulness than any else, because none ever so miserable as thy self ; you young men hear this, though you have spent the flower of your years in vanity, madness, and filthy lusts, yet the Lord calls you in to him ; you old men grown gray headed in wickedness, though it be the last hour of the day

in

in your life, yet behold the Lord would hire you, and calls you to come in, before the sorest wrath of a long provoked God break out upon you ; you that have despised God's messengers, crucified the Lord Jesus afresh, embrued your hands in his blood, scorned and hated the saints, and the word of God's grace ; hear what wisdom saith, Prov. 1. 22, 23. *Return ye scorners ; Oh consider, thou that art ignorant of Christ, that never sought after Christ many a year together, that have continually provoked him to his face, how the Lord calls you, Isai. 1, 2, 3.* you, even you, are those the Lord calls, and will you not come ?

3. Consider why the Lord calls thee, is it because he hath any need of you to honour him ? I tell you, he could have gone to others that would have given his gospel better welcome than it hath had from you ; he could have gone to many kings and princes, and out of that golden metal have made himself vessels of honour, rather than out of such base mould as thou art made of ; he could have honoured himself in thy ruin, as in many millions of other men, and lose nothing by thee neither, he could have been blessed without you in the bosom of his Father ; or is it because thou hast done any thing for him ? alas ! thou hast not returned him thy nutshels, thou hast not had so much as a form of religion, thou hast done as much mischief to him as thou couldst, *Jer. 3. 5.* thou hast wearied him with thine iniquities, and made him serve with thy sins, and hast saddled his heart exceedingly by strange impenitency, *Isai. 43. 24.* the only reason that hath moved him to call upon thee, hath been to pity thee, seeing thee

thee running to the fire that never can be quenched, without stop or stay ; 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16 and because thou art fallen by thine iniquities, Hos. 14. 1. And shall not this bring you home ?

4. Consider for what end the Lord calls thee, is it not to come and take possession of all the grace of Christ, Gal. 1. 6. nay of all the glory of Christ, 1 Thes. 2. 12. nay to a most near, sweet, and everlasting fellowship with Christ himself ? 1 Cor 1. 9. and can I say any more ? can you desire any more than this ? if the Lord should say unto any of us, Come into the garden, and there watch and pray with me, sorrow and suffer with me ; who of us would not account our selves unworthy of such honour ? but for the Lord to say, Come and enter into your rest, the land, the kingdom of grace and glory is before you, go up and possess it, Oh where are our hearts, if this call will not draw ? if the Lord should say at the day of judgment, when the heavens and earth shall be on a light fire, and the Lord Jesus set upon the throne of his glory, admired of all his saints and angels ; Come you blessed and take the kingdom prepared for you, would you not gladly come at that call ? Oh beloved, the Lord Jesus now in the throne of his glory in heaven, behold he calls you unto a better good than that kingdom ; he calls you to come and take himself and all his precious benefits prepared for you, though in thy self accursed ; and would he have you take possession of all this ? is it not the praise of the riches of his grace ? Eph. 1. If this be his end, then if thou wilt not come for thy own good, yet for his sake, his grace sake come.

5. How

5. How long the Lord hath called thee, how oft he would have gathered thee ; he hath stood long until *locks are wet with the dew of the night*, Cant. 5. 1, 2. It may be you are afraid, it hath been so long, that now time is past ; Oh no, for whiles the Lord calls by his word and spirit, *now is the acceptable time*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. I confess there is a time wherein the Lord will not be found, but while the Lord is near unto thee by his ministry, by his spirit, convincing, affecting, stirring, knocking at thy heart, the time is not yet past, the sun is not yet set, so long as those beams appear, *Isai. 55. 6.* those thoughts which discourage thee from coming to Christ, while the voice of his call is heard, cannot be of Christ but satan, whose principal work is to lay such stumbling blocks in our way to him.

6. Consider the greatness of your sin in not coming to him.

1. This is the *condemning sin* ; for no sin should condemn thee, if thou didst come to him, John 3. 17, 18, 19 thou shoudest please him, & as it were, make him amends for all the wrongs thou hast done him, by coming to him, Heb. 11. 5, 6, 7.

2. This aggravates all other sins, *If I had not spake to them, (faith Christ) they had had no sin, i. e. comparatively ; but now they have no cloak for their sin*, John 15. 22. Can the sin of devils be so great as thine, that never had a Saviour sent unto them ? yet thou hast one sent and come out of heaven to thee, calling to thee from heaven, and yet thou despisest him.

3. This provokes the Lord to most unappeasable and unquenchable wrath, Heb. 3. 11. *I swear in*

in my wrath they should not enter into my rest ; after sins against the law, the Lord did not swear that man should die, (for that notes an unchangeable purpose) but let Christ be despised, the Lord now swears in his wrath against such a one : *he that draws back my soul shall take no pleasure in him.* Heb. 10. 38. After sin against the law, the Lord took pleasure in glorifying his grace upon man fallen, but if you draw back from the grace of Christ in the gospel, the Lord will take no pleasure in you.

4. It provokes the sorest and most unsupportable wrath, *Take heed you despise not him that speaketh,* for if they did not escape who refused him that spake on earth ; much less shall we that despise him that speaks from heaven, Heb. 12. 25. Take heed therefore you despise not him that speaketh ; the word *despise* signifies in the original to despise or refuse upon some colour of reason : every man hath some seeming reason against believing : one thinks time is past, another thinks he is excluded by some antecedent decree of election, another thinks he is not humbled, nor holy enough, another makes excuse not by pretending his ale-house and whore-house, but his Farm and Merchandise, Mat. 22. another thinks he is well enough without Christ, &c. Oh take heed, for the wrath of God most intollerable is your portion, the lowest dungeon of darkness, is thy place in hell for this sin ; *Hear ye despisers and wonder, for I will work (faith the Lord) a work in your days, which you shall not believe though it be told you,* Acts 13. 41. I pray you what is this work ? certainly a work of wrath and vengeance ; but what is it ? you will not believe though you be told of it, Oh you secure sinners ; but what is it that

they will not believe ? nay truly the Lord himself is silent there, and saith nothing, as if it were so great and dreadful, that the glorious Lord himself is not able to express it ; and truly no more am I : Oh therefore be not worse than that *generation of vipers* that came in to John because some had forewarned them to escape the wrath to come, Mat. 3. but come unto a Saviour that you may be ever blessed with him. But you will say,

How should we come to him ?

Answe. 1. Come to him mourning, and loathing your selves for your long continuance in refusing of him, *Jer. 31. 9. Ezek. 6. 9.* come mourning for all thy sins, but especially for this, that thou hast slighted him & not sought him, shed his blood, rent his bowels ; and if thou canst not come, yet come to him and make thy moan to him of thy unbelief and inability to come.

2. Come with confidence that *they that do come he will never cast away*, and that thou being come *he will never cast thee away, John 6. 37. Heb. 10. 22.*

3. Come gladly and willingly, glorifying his grace, but abasing thy self, *Acts 2. 39 & 13. 47. With gladness shall they be brought and enter into the King's presence, Psal. 45. 15.* Do not receive God's grace as a common thing, but thankfully and with all thy heart : for the end why the Lord gives Christ to any man is the glory of his grace ; if the Lord attains this end he desires no more, for why should he, when he hath his end ?

4. Do not come & taste, but *come and drink, Joh. 7. 37.* you may famish to death and pine away in your iniquities, and prove apostates, even to commit the unpardonable sin, if you do but *taste of him,*

him, as those did, *Heb. 6. 4, 5.* but drink abundantly, *Oh ye beloved of the Lord, Cant. 5. 1.* If you cannot satisfy your souls by what you feel already received from him, then satiate your souls by what you may find in him, *Isai. 45. 24.* take possession of all the grace, glory, peace, promises of the Lord Jesus, and leave not a hoofe behind thee, and be for ever refreshed and comforted therein.

5. So come to him, as that *you keep your confidence*, and keep your saviour of him and joy in him, *Heb. 3. 14.* with 6. let the word that called you be ever sweet and precious, as *David said, Psal. 119. 53.* *I will never forget thy precepts, for by them thou hast quickned me.* Let the Lord Jesus be ever fresh, *Heb. 3. 6.* and as *an ointment poured out*; take heed that the *blood wherewith you are sanctified*, do not grow *a common thing*, and promises withered flowers, and sermons of Christ and his grace (unless there be some new notions about them) as dead drink, for this is the great sin of this age; the old truths about the grace of Christ, and the simplicity of the gospel is as water in mens shooes, ministers must preach novelties, and make a quintessential extracts out of the scriptures, and it may be, press *blood* out of them sometime rather than *milk*, or else their doctrines ate to many as almanacks out of date, or as news they heard seven years since; and they knew this before: O the wrath of God upon this God-gluttend, Christ-gluttend, gospel-gluttend age; unless it be among a very few poor believers, whose souls are kept empty, poor, and hungry by some continual temptations or afflictions, and they are indeed glad of any thing, if it be any thing of Christ!

Verily I am afraid such a dismal night is towards of spiritual desertions, and of outward, but sore afflictions of famine, war, blood, mortality, deaths of God's precious servants especially ; that the Lord will fill the hearts of all churches, families, christians, that shall be saved in those time, with such rendings, tearings, shakings, anguish of spirit, as scarce never more in the worst days of our fore-fathers ; and that this shall continue, until the remnant that escape shall say, *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord* ; blessed be the face and feet of that minister, that shall come unto us in Christ's name, and tell us, that there is a Saviour for sinners, and that he calls us for to come.

And thus I have done with this divine truth, *wiz.* That the Lord Jesus in the day of his power, fayes us out of our wretched and sinful estate, by so much conviction, as begets compunction ; so much compunction, as brings in humiliation ; so much humiliation, as makes us to come to Christ by faith.



C H A P. II.

*That every Sinner thus believing in Christ, is at that instant translated into a most blessed and happy Estate : John 5. 24
Psal. 2. ult.*

Quest. **I** F the question be, What is that happy condition they are made partakers of?

Answe.

Ans'w. I answer, this appears in these six priviledges or benefits, principally.

1. *Justification*, all their sins are pardoned.
2. *Reconciliation*, peace with God.
3. *Adoption*, they are made the Sons of God.
4. *Sanctification*, they are restored to the Image of God.
5. *Audience of all their prayers* to God.
6. *Glorification*, in the kingdom of heaven, in eternal communion with God.

THE SIX PRIVILEDGES OR BENEFITS

S E C T. I.

First, *Justification*.

THIS is the first benefit which immediately follows our union unto Christ by faith, that look as we are no sooner children of *Adam*, and branches of that root by natural generation, but we immediately contract the guilt of his sin, and so original pollution; so we are no sooner made branches of the second *Adam* by vocation, and so united unto Christ by faith, but immediately we have the imputation of his righteousness to our justification, after which we receive in order of nature (not time) our sanctification; there is no truth more necessary to be known than this, it being the principal thing contained in the gospel, *Rom. 1. 17.* the law shewing how a man may be just and live; but it hath not the least word how a sinful man may be just and not die, this

proper to the revelation of the gospel: Let me therefore give you a taste of the nature of it,

Our justification is wrought by a double act. 1. On God the Father's part, he by a gracious sentence absolves and acquits a sinner, and accepts of him as righteous. 2. On God the Son's part, procuring the passing of this sentence by his satisfaction imputed and applied: the Father being the person principally wronged hath chief power to forgive, yet in justice he cannot acquit, nor in truth account a man unrighteous as righteous, unless the Son step in and satisfy; *for whose sake he forgives*: as the apostle expressly saith, *Eph. 4. ult.* so that our justification is wholly out of ourselves, and we are meerly passive in it. Justification is not to make us inwardly just, as the Papists dream; but it is a law-term, and is opposed against *condemnation*, *Rom. 8. 33.* now look as *condemnation* is the sentence of the judge, condemning a man to die for his offences, or sin; so *justification* is the sentence of God the Father, absolving a man from the guilt and punishment of sin for the sake of the righteousness of Christ; That you may more particularly understand me, take this description of it.

Justification is the gracious sentence of God the Father, whereby for the satisfaction of Christ, apprehended by faith, and imputed to the faithful, he absolves them from the guilt and condemnation of all sin, and accepts them as perfectly righteous to eternall life.

Quest. Let me open the particulars herein briefly in several Queries.

What it is in general, to justify.

Answ.

Answe. 'Tis to pass sentence of absolution ; to pronounce a sinner righteous ; 'tis God's pardon, remission of sins ; this appears from the opposition mentioned it stands in unto condemnation, as a judge pardons a man when he saith he shall live ; or as a man manifestly forgives another when he gives him a promise, or a bill of discharge ; so that (note this by the way that) our justification is not God's eternal purpose to forgive, but it is God's sentence published, a sinner is justified intentionally in election, but not actually till this sentence be past and published ; the difficulty only here is, where this sentence is pronounced ; for answer whereof note, that there is but a double court wherein 'tis passed ; 1. Publickly in the court of heaven, or in the court-rolls of the word ; (for there is no other court of heaven where God speaks, but this.) 2. Privately, in the court of conscience. By the first we are justified indeed from personal guilt ; by the second we feel our selves justified by the removal of conscience guilt. The first is expressly mentioned, *Act. 10. 43*, and *Rom. 1. 17*. The second is expressly set down also, *Psal. 32. 4*. The first is the cause and foundation of the second ; the second ariseth from the first : otherwise, peace of conscience is a meer delusion : the first is sometimes long before the second, *Psal. 88. 15*. as the sentence of condemnation in the word is sometimes long before a man feels that sentence in his own conscience ; the second comes in a long time after in some christians : The first is constant and unchangeable ; the second very changeable : he that hath peace in his conscience to day, may lose it by to morrow. So that you

are not (in seeking the testimony of our justification) to look for a sentence from heaven immediately pronounced of God, but look for it in the court of his word, (the court of heaven) which though we hear not, sometime, yet it rings and fills heaven & earth with the sound of it, *viz.* *There is no condemnation to them that believe* : for hereby the Lord mercifully provideth for the peace of his people more abundantly. As when a poor creditor is acquitted, or a malefactor pardoned, I beseech you (saith he) let me have an acquittance, a discharge, a pardon under your own hand, and this quiets him against all accusers : so 'tis here ; the Lord gives us an acquittance in his word under his own hand and seal, and so gives us peace, *Heb. 6. 18.*

2. Who is it that justifieth ?

Answe. 'Tis God the Father, *Roma. 8. 34.* *Father forgive them*, saith Christ. And hence Christ is an advocate with the Father, *1 John 2. 2.* All the three persons were wronged by sin ; yet the wrong was chiefly against the Father, because his manner of working appeared chiefly in creation, from the righteousnesses of which, man fell by sin. The Father forgives primarily by sovereign authority ; the Son of man Christ Jesus forgives by immediate dispensation and commission from the Father, *John 5. 22. Mat. 9. 6.* the apostles and their successors forgive ministerially *John 21. 23.* The Father forgives by granting pardon, the Son by procuring, the ministers (where the spirit also is) by publishing or applying pardon : so that this is great consolation, that God the Father the party chiefly incensed, 'tis he that justifieth, 'tis he that passeth

passeth this gracious sentence, and then who can condemn?

3. Why doth the Father thus justify?

Ans^w. 'Tis meerly his grace, and out of grace. And hence I call it his *gracious sentence*, Rom. 3. 24. *justified freely by his grace*. What is his grace? The prophet *Isaiah* expounds it to be not our grace, or works of grace, (although wrought by grace) but *his own name sake*, Isai 43. 25. In some respect indeed it is just for God to forgive, *viz.* in regard of Christ's satisfaction, 1 John 1. 7. Rom. 3. 20. The mercy seat and the tables of the law in the ark, may well stand together, but that Christ was sent to satisfy justice, and that thy sins were satisfied for, and not another's: thus it's wholly of grace. It therefore you think the Lord pardons your sins because you have been less sinners, than others; or if you think the Lord will not pardon your sins, because you are greater sinners than any else, you sin exceedingly against the riches of God's grace in this point.

4. What is the mean by which the Father doth thus justify?

Ans^w. 'Tis for the satisfaction or by the price of the redemption of Christ, Rom. 3. 24. & 5. 10. Eph. 1. 7. for mercy would, but justice could not forgive, without satisfaction for the wrong done. Hence Christ satisfies, that grace and mercy might have their full scope of forgiving. So that, neither works before conversion, which are but glistering sins, Rom. 1. 18. nor works of grace in us after conversion, can be the causes of our justification: for *Abraham* when he was justified and sanctified, yet had *not* whereof to boast, but believed in him that justifie

justified the ungodly, Rom. 4. 5. And the apostle Paul saith expressly, *We that believe have believed, that we might be justified*, Gal. 2. 16. 'tis therefore the price of Christ's redemption which doth procure our justification. But understand this aright, for this price is not applied to each particular man as the *common price*, redeeming all, (for then every believer should be accounted a saviour, and redeemer of all) but as the price of those souls in particular, to whom it is specially intended, and particularly applied. Christ's righteousness is sufficient to justify all to whom it is imputed, but it is no further imputed than to the attaining the end of imputation, *viz.* to justify and save me in particular, not to make me a head of the church or a common saviour : it argues a man weakly principled, that denys the necessity of Christ's satisfaction to our justification, because sooth every believer should then be a redeemer.

By *satisfaction* I understand, the whole obedience of Christ unto the very death, which is both active and passive, by which we are justified ; *Heb. 10. 10. Phil. 2. 8.* that righteousness of Christ (wrought in his satisfaction) is imputed, which satisfies the law and divine justice, *Gal. 4. 1, to 4.* which is both active and passive : the very reason why the law requires perfect obedience of us, which we cannot possibly bring before God ; is, that we might seek for it in Christ, that fulfilled all righteousness : and therefore he is called *the end of the law for righteousness*, Rom. 10. 3, 4. And it is strange that any should deny justification by Christ's active obedience, upon this ground, *viz.* because that *by the works of the law* (which satisfy the

the law) shall no sinner be justified ; and yet withal say, that we are justified by that which satisfies the law.

This righteousness of Christ is not that of the Godhead, (for then what need was there for Christ to do or suffer ?) but that which was wrought in the manhood. And hence it is finite in it self, though infinite in value in that it was the righteousness of such a person. This righteousness of God may be considered two ways ; First, absolutely in it self, Secondly, respectively, as done for us.

1. Christ's absolute righteousness is not imputed to us, *viz.* as he is mediator, head of the church, having the spirit without measure (which is next to infinite) &c. for though these things are applied for our good, yet they are not imputed as our righteousness ; and therefore the objection vanisheth, which saith we cannot be justified by Christ's righteousness, because it is of such infinite perfection.

2. The respective or dispensative righteousness which some call *justitia fidei iussoria*, is that whereby Christ is just *for us* in fulfilling the law, in bearing God's image, we once had, and have now lost by sin ; and thus we are truly said to be as righteous as Christ by imputation, because he kept the law for us : and here observe that the question is not whether all that Christ did and had is imputed to us as our righteousness, but whether all that he did *pro nobis*, for us, as a surety in fulfilling the law, be not *for substance*, our righteousness ; and therefore to think that we are not justified by Christ's righteousness, because then we are justified by his working of miracles, preaching of sermons, which women are not regularly capable of, is but

to

to cast blocks before the blind ; so that though Christ doth not bestow his personal wisdom and justice upon another, yet what hinders, but that *that* which Christ doth by his wisdom and righteousness for another, the same should stand good for him for whom it is done ? for thus it is in sundry cases among men ; Christ's essential righteousness, infinite wisdom, fulness of spirit without measure, &c. is not imputed to us ; yet these have conspired together to do that for us, and suffer that for us, by which we come to be accounted righteous before God : he shall be called *the Lord our righteousness*, Jer. 23. 6. This righteousness therefore imputed to us justifies us, Rom. 5. 18. we are said to be made *the righteousness of God in him* : not the righteousness of God whereby he is just, but whereby *we are just* ; opposed to the righteousness of man which is called *our own righteousness*, Rom. 10. 3. & 1. 17. Not righteousness *from him* (as the Papists dream) but righteousness *in him* ; nor remission by Christ only, but righteousness in Christ ; this imputed justifies : as sin imputed condemns.

5. Who are the persons the Lord doth justify ?

*Ans*w. They are believers ; we are justified by faith, Rom. 5. or for Christ's righteousness apprehended by faith, Phil. 3. 9. it is by faith not as a work of grace, but as by an instrument appointed of God for this end. Christ did not die that our sins should be actually and immediately pardoned, but mediately by faith, John 3. 16. and 17. 20. and the Lord in wisdom hath appointed this as the only means of applying righteousness, because this above all other graces casts down all the righteousness

ness of man in point of justification; and so all cause of boasting, and advanceth grace and mercy only, *Rom. 3. 27. & 4. 16.* and *4. 5.* and *9. 30, 31, 32.* the faithful account themselves ungodly in the business of justification, and thence it is said that *Abraham* (though a godly man in himself, yet) believed in him that justifies the ungodly: he only is righteous whom God pronounceth and faith is righteous. Now faith above all other graces believes the word; and a believer saith, I believe I am righteous, before God, not because I feel it so in my self, but because God saith I am so in his Son, so that you are not justified before you believe; nor then only, when you have performed many holy duties, but at the first instant of your closing with Christ, you are then to see it, and by faith to admire God's rich grace for it.

6. What is the extent of this sentence?

Answe. The description faith, that Christ's satisfaction thus applied, the Father doth two things.

1. He absolves them from all guilt and condemnation of sin, so that in this sense, he sees no iniquity in Jacob, chastisements they may now have after justification, but no punishments; crosses, not curses; such as destroy their sins, no punishments to destroy their souls; hence those phrases in scripture, Scattering sins as a mist, blotting them out, remembering them no more, setting them out as far as the east is from the west: for Christ being made sin for his people, and this being imputed, he abolishing all sin, by one offering, *Heb. 10.* hence all are forgiven; and hence it is that there can be no suit in law against a sinner; the law being satisfied,

ed, and the sinner absolved ; nay hence sin is condemned, and the sinner spared, *Rom. 8. 3.* as Christ died for us, so he was acquitted for us, and we in him ; we in him in redemption, we by him in actual faith and application. Whether all sins, past present, and to come, are actually forgiven at the first instant of believing, I will not, dare not determine ; this is safe to say,

1. That the sentence of pardon of all thy sins, is at an instant, *Rom. 8. 1.* but not the sense nor execution of pardon : actual sentence of pardon, not actual application of pardon, till they be actually committed, *Col. 2. 13. Heb. 9. 12. and 10. 1, 2. Rom. 3. 25.* There is a pardon of course (some say) for sins of infirmities, I say there is also a pardon of course for sins of wilfulness, all manner of sins ; but not sense of pardon always.

2. He accepts and accounts us perfectly righteous, *Rom. 4. 3.* Faith is accounted for righteousness, not the act of faith ; as the Arminians would, but the object of it apprehended by faith ; *Rom. 5. 17.* The Lord accounts us as righteous thro' Christ's righteousness, as if we had kept all the law, suffered all the punishments for the breach of it ; *Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect,* whom God hath justified ? saith the apostle, *Rom. 8.* satan may answer, Yes, I can, for the law saith, *The soul that sins must die :* Christ answers, but I have died for him, and satisfied the utmost farthing to justice in that point : true, may satan say, here is satisfaction for the offence, but the law must be kept also ; the Lord Christ answers, I am the end of the Law for righteousness, I am perfectly holy and righteous, not for my self, (for I am a common

mon person) but for this poor sinner who in himself is exceedingly and wholly polluted ; & hence the Lord covers sins, as well as pardons sins ; cloaths us with Christ, as well as remits sin for Christ's sake ; and as we are accounted sinners by imputation of Adam's legal unrighteousness, so are we accounted righteous by the second Adam's legal righteousness, and that unto eternal life, *Rom. 5. 17, 18.* Thus you see the nature, now the Lord opens your eyes to see the glory of this priviledge ; you that never felt the heavy load of sin, the terrors of a distressed conscience arising from the sense of an angry God, cannot prize the priviledge ; but if you have, you cannot but say as he did, *O blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sin is covered ;* and again, *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes no sin,* *Psal. 32. 12.* The Lord pity us ; how many be there in these times, that know there is no justification but by Christ's righteousness, and yet esteem it not ? let me therefore give you one glimpse of the glory of it in these particulars.

1. This is the righteousness by which a sinner is righteous : the law shews you how a man may be righteous, but there is not the least tittle of the law, which shews you how a sinner may become righteous, this never could have entered into the thoughts of angels how this could be ; it is cross to sense and reason, for a man accursed and sinful in himself, to be at that very time blessed and righteous in another ; to say, *Lord depart from me, for I am a sinful man,* *Luke 5. 8.* is the voice of natural conscience awakened, not only concerning God out of Christ, but even when God appears in Christ as he did then to Peter ; but that the Lord

should become our righteousness, when we think no sinners like our selves : no cases, no afflictions, no desertions like ours, who can believe this? yet thus it is; the very scope of the fourth chapter to the *Romans*, Roma. 4. 5. is not to shew how a just man may be made righteous, but how a sinner may; our own duties, works, and reformation, may make us at the best but less sinful, but this righteousness makes a sinner sinless.

2. By this a sinner is righteous before the judgment seat of God: what man that hath awakenings of conscience, but trembles exceedingly when he considers the judgment seat of God, and of his strict account there; but by this we can look upon the face of the Judge himself with boldness. *It is God that justifies, who shall condemn?* Rom. 8. 32. Can Christ condemn? he is our advocate. Can sin condemn? why did Christ die and was made sin then? can satan condemn, if God himself justify us? if the Judge acquits us, what can the jaylor do? can the law condemn? no, the Lord Christ hath fulfilled it for us, to the utmost; Oh the stings that many have, saying, what shall I do when I die and go down to the dust? may not the Lord have something against me at the day of reckoning that I never saw, nor got cancelled? O poor creatures! is Christ now before God without spot? hath he cleared all reckonings? verily as he is before him; so are you; through that righteousness which is in him for you.

3. By this you have perfect righteousness, as perfectly righteous, as Christ the righteous, 1 John 2. 1, 2. and 3. 7. All your own righteousness tho' is

it be the fruit of the spirit of grace, is a blotted, stained righteousness, very imperfect and little ; but by this, the faith of *David, Peter, Paul*, was not more precious than thine is, because thou hast the same righteousness as they had, 2 Pet. 1, 2: What sincere soul but esteems of perfect holiness more than of heaven it self ? Oh consider thou hast it (in this sense I now speak of) in the Lord Jesus.

4. By this you have continual righteousness ; what dost thou complain of daily ? is it not because thou feelest new sins, or the same sins confessed, and lamented, and in part subdued ; nay some to thy feeling wholly subdued ; but they return upon thee again, and the springs in the bottom fill thy soul again, that thou art weary of thy self and life. O but remember, this is not a cistern, but a fountain-opened, Zech. 13. 1. for thee to wash in ; as sin abounds, so grace in this gift of righteousness abounds much more ; the Lord hath changes of garments for thee, Zech. 3. 1, to 7. by means of which, there shall never enter into the Lord's heart, one hard thought toward thee of casting thee off, or of taking revenge, upon any new occasion or fall unto sin.

5. By this you have eternal righteousness, that never can be lost ; if the Lord should make thee as perfectly righteous as once ~~Adam~~ was, or angels in heaven are, & put on thy royal apparel again, thou wast in danger of losing this, and of being stript naked again ; but now the Lord hath put your righteousness into a safer hand which never shall be lost, Heb. 9. 12. Dan: 9. 24.

6. By this you please God, and are more amiable before him, than if you had it in your self ; do not say this is a poor righteousness, which is thus out of thy self in another ; why do you think righteousness in your self would be best ? Is it not because hereby you think you shall please God ? Suppose thou hadst it, yet thy righteousness should be at the best but mans righteousness, but this is called *the righteousness of God*, which cannot but be more pleasing to him, than that in thy self, 2 Cor. 5. 20. what is angelical righteousness to the righteousness of God ? 'tis but a glow-worm before the sun : the smell of *Esau's* garments, the robes of this righteousness of the Son of God, are of a sweeter odour than thine can be or ever shall be, Eph. 5. 1, 2. 'Tis said, *By faith Abel, Enoch, &c. pleased God* : their persons were sinful, their own duties were weak, yet by faith in this they pleased God : thou thinkest when thou goest to prayer, if I had no sin, but perfect holiness in me, surely God would hear me. I tell you when you bring this offering of Christ's righteousness, the Lord had rather have that, than all you can do, you bring that which pleaseth him more, than if you bro't your own. For ask thy own conscience if it be possible for the righteousness that is done by thy self to be more pleasing to God, than the righteousness of the Son of God, the Lord of glory himself, done and perfected for thee.

7. By this you glorify God exceedingly, as *Abraham believed, Rom. 4. and gave glory unto God. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory, Isai. 45. 15.*

A. By

1. By this you glorify him perfectly in an instant, for you continue to do all that the law requires that instant you believe. The apostle propounds the question, *Rom. 3. 21.* Whether a christian by faith doth make void the law? No, saith the apostle, but we establish the law. How is that? *Praeius* shews three ways: one is this, because that perfect righteousness which the law requires of us, we perform it in Christ by faith. So that in one instant thou continuest to do all that the law requires, and hence ariseth the impossibility of a true believers apostacy, as from one principal cause: They deny satisfaction by Christ's doing of the law, because by our own works and doings we cannot be justified before God, may as well deny satisfaction by Christ's sufferings, because by our own sufferings we cannot be justified; our obedience to the law in way of suffering, is as truly the works of the law, as our obedience in way of doing.

2. By this you glorify God's justice; whatever justice requires to be done or suffered, you give it unto God by faith in Christ.

3. By this you glorify grace and mercy, *Eph. 1. 7.* for by this means mercy may over-abound toward you, and you may triumph in it as sure and certain to you. What a blessed misterie is this! doth it not grieve you that you cannot glorify God in your times and places? Behold the way, if thou canst not do it by obedience, thou mayst by faith: and thereby make restitution of all God's glory lost & stolen from him by thy disobedience to him.

4. By this you have peace in your consciences: by this, Christ's blood is sprinkled upon them, and that

that cools the burning torments of them, *Rom. 5.1*
The commers unto the Levitical sacrifices and washings, (types of this offering of Christ) could not thereby be perfected and be without the guilty conscience of sin: none of your duties can pacify conscience, but as they carry you hither to this righteousness, but the commers to this have no more terrors of conscience for sin, I mean they have no just cause to have any; this *rain-bow* appearing over your heads, is a certain sign of fair weather, and that there shall be no more *deluge* of wrath to overwhelm thee.

9. By this all miseries are removed; when thy sins are pardoned, there is something like death, and shame and sickness, but they are not; it's said, *Isai. 33. ult.* *There shall be none sick among you;* why so? because they shall be forgiven their iniquities: 'Tis no sickness in a manner, no sorrow, no affliction, if the venom sting, and curse be taken away by pardon of sin; thy sickness, sorrow, losses, death it self is better now than health, joy, abundance, life; you may here see *death, hell, grave, swallowed up in victory*, and now tread upon the necks of them, *1 Cor. 15.* You may see life in death, heaven in the deepest hell, glory in shame: when thou seest all thy sins done away in the blood of Christ Jesus. This is the blessedness of all you poor believers and commers to [the Lord Jesus: what should you do but believe it, and rejoice in it? If the wicked that apply this righteousness presumptuously say, Let us sin that grace may abound, and make no other use of forgiveness, but to run in debt, and sin with a license? why shou'd not you say, on the other side, *Let me believe and own*

own my portion in this righteousness, that as my sins have abounded, so my love may abound ; as my sins have been exceeding great, so the Lord may be exceeding sweet ; as my sins continue and encrease, so my thankfulness, glory in God, triumph over death, grave, sins, through Christ, may also encrease ; as you see righteousness in Christ for ever yours, so you may from thence expect from him such a righteousness as may make you righteous also as he is righteous. Tremble thou hard-hearted impenitent wretch, that didst never yet come to Christ, nor feel thy need of him, or prize his blood ; this is none of thy portion, all thy sins are yet upon thee, and shall one day meet thee in the day of the Lord's fierce wrath, when he shall appear as an everlasting burning before thine eyes, and thou stand guilty before him as chaff and stubble.



S E C T. II.

Secondly, *Reconciliation.*

THIS is the second benefit which in order of nature follows our justification, although sometime in a large sense it is taken for the whole work of justification, strictly taken, it follows it, Rom. 5. 1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, i. e. not only peace from God in our consciences, but peace with God in our reconciliation to him, and his favour toward us ; Being justified,*

we shall be saved from wrath, i. e. not only the outward fruits of wrath, but wrath from whence those come ; Christ is first King of righteousness, then King of peace, Heb. 7. 2. for is not sin the cause of God's anger ? must not sin therefore be first removed in our justification ; before we can have God's anger allayed in our reconciliation ? So that as in our justification the Lord accounts us just, so in our reconciliation (himself being at peace with us) he accounts us friends ; indeed our meritorious reconciliation is by Christ's death ; as the king's son who procures his father's favour toward a malefactor, who yet lies in cold irons, and knows it not ; and this is before our justification or being, Rom. 5. 9. but actual and efficacious reconciliation, whereby we come to the fruition and possession of it, is after our justification, Rom. 3. 24, 25. Christ is a propitiation by faith, and here the malefactor hath tidings of favour, if he will accept of it, Eph. 2. 15, 17. and of this I now speak : God and man were once friends, but by sin a great breach is made, the Lord only bearing the wrongs is justly provoked, Isai. 65. 2, 3. Man that only doth the wrong is notwithstanding at enmity with him, and will not be intreated to accept of favour, much less to repent of this wrong, Jer. 8. 4, to 8. the Lord Jesus therefore heals this breach by being mediator between both ; he takes up the quarrel, and first reconciles God to man, and man to God, in himself, in redemption, and after this reconciles God and man by himself in (or immediately upon) our justification.

This reconciliation consists in two things chiefly.

J. In

1. In our peace with God, whereby the Lord lays by all acts of hostility against us, *Rom. 5. 1.*

2. In love and favour of God, I do not mean God's love of *good will*, for this is in election, but his love of *complacency and delight*, for till we are justified, the Lord behaves himself as an enemy and stranger to us who are polluted before him, but then he begins thus to love us, *1. John 4. 10, 16. Col. 1. 21, 22.* A gardiner may intend to turn a crab-tree stock into an apple-tree, his intention doth not alter the nature of it, until it actually be ingrafted upon: so we are *by nature the children of wrath*, *Eph 1. 3.* The intention of God the Father, or his love of good will doth not make us children of favour and sons of peace, until the Lord actually call us to and ingraft us into Christ, and then as Christ is *the delight of God*, *Isai 4. 1, 2,* so we in him are loved with the same love of delight. Peace with God and love of God are of different degrees of our reconciliation: a prince is at peace or ceaseth war against a rebel, yet he may not bring the rebel before him, into his bosom of special favour, delight, and love; but the Lord doth both, towards us enemies, strangers, rebels, devils, in our reconciliation with him.

5. Oh consider what a blessed estate this is to be at peace with God: It was the title of honour the Lord put upon *Abraham to be the friend of God*, *Isai. 41. 8.* I am not able to express what a privilege this is, 'tis better felt than spoken of; as *Moses* said, *Psal. 90.* *Who knows the greatness of his wrath*; so I may say, who knows the greatness of this favour and love?

1. That

1. That God should be pacified with thee after anger, this is exceeding glorious, *Isai.* 12. 1, 2. What is man that the Lord should visit him, or look upon him, though he never had sinned ? but to look upon thee, nay to love thee, after provocation by sin, after such wrath, which like fire hath consumed thousand thousands, and burnt down to the bottom of hell, and is now and ever shall be burning upon them ; Oh blessed are they that find this favour !

2. That the Lord should be pacified wholly and thorowly, that there should be no anger left for you to feel. The poor afflicted church might object against those sweet promises made here, *Isai.* 27. 1, 2, 3. that she felt no love : you are mistaken, saith the Lord, *Fury is not in me*, ver. 4. indeed against briars and thorns, and obstinate sinners that prick and cut me to the very heart by their impenitency, I have, but none against you : out of Christ, God is a consuming fire, but in Christ he is nothing else but love, *1 John 4. 16.* and though there may be fatherly frowns, chastisements, reproofs, and rods though he may for a time hide his face, shut out thy prayers, defer to sinful promises, &c. yet all these are out of pure love to thee, and thou shalt see it, and feel it so in thy latter end, *Heb. 12. 8, 9.* Never did *David* love *Jonathan* (whose love exceeded) as the Lord loves thee from his very heart, now thou art in Christ by faith.

3. That the Lord shall be pacified eternally, never to cast thee off again for any sins or miseries thou falllest into, this is wonderful : those whom men love they forsake, if their love be abused ; or if their friends be in affliction, they then bid them

good

good night ; but the Lord's love and favour is everlasting, Isai. 9. 7. The mountains may depart out of their places, and the hills cast down to valleys, but the Lord's kindness never shall, never can. Isai. 54. 10. He hath hid his face a little moments, whiles thou didst live in thy sin and unbelief, but now with everlasting mercy he will embrace thee ; nay which is more, the abounding of thy sin is now the occasions of the abounding of his grace, Rom. 5. 20. Thy very wants and miseries are the very causes of his bowels and tender mercies, Heb. 4. 15, 16. Oh what a priviledge is this ? Did the Lord ever shew mercy and favour to the angels that sinned ? Did not one sin cast them out of favour utterly ? Oh infinite grace, that so many thousand thousands every day gushing out of thy heart against kindness and love, nay the greatest, dearest love of God, should not incense his sorest displeasure against thee ! the Lord that poured out all his anger upon his own Son for thee, and for all thy sins, cannot now pour out, nay he hath not one drop left (though he would) to pour out upon thee for any one sin.

4. That the Lord should be thus pacified with enemies ; a man may be easily pacified with one that offends him a little, but with an enemy that strikes at his life, (as by every sin you do) this is wonderful, yet this is the case here, Rom. 5. 7, 8.

5. That the Lord shall be pacified, even with enemies, by such a wonderful way as the blood of Jesus Christ, Rom. 5. 7, 8. this is such love, as one would think the infinite wisdom of a blessed God could have devised no greater ; by this (v. 6.) he commended and set out his love, which tho' now

it grow a stale and common thing in our days, yet this is that which is enough to burst the heart with astonishment and amazement, to think that the party offended, (who therefore had no cause to seek peace with us again.) should find out such a way of peace as this is ; w^o to the world that despise this peace.

6. That being thus pacified, you may come into God's presence with boldness at any time, & ask what you will : I wonder what he can deny you if he loves you, Rom. 5. 2, and which is yet more, that now all creatures are *at peace with you*, Job 5. 23. as when the captain of the army is pacified, none of his soldiers must hurt or strike that man ; nay, that hereby all your enemies should be forced to do good to you ; *Oh death where is now thy sting ?*

I have oft wondered, if Christ hath borne all our miseries and suffered death for us, why then should we feel any miseries or see death any more ? and I could never satisfy my own heart by any answers given, better than by this, viz. that if the Lord should abolish the very being of our miseries, they should indeed then do us no hurt ; but neither could they then do us any good : for if they were not at all, how could they do us good ? Now the Lord Jesus hath made such a peace for us, as that our enemies shall not only not hurt us, but they shall be forced (himself ordering of them) to do much good unto us ; all your wants shall but make you pray the more, all your sorrows shall but humble you the more, all your temptations shall but exercise your graces the more ; all your spiritual desertions shall but make you long for heaven, and to be with Christ

the

the more: it is now part of your portion, not only to have *Paul*, and *Apollos*, and *world*, but *death* it self, 1 Cor. 3:22. to do you good: Oh Lord what a blessed estate is this; which, though thousands living under the gospel of peace hear of, yet they regard not; they can strain their consciences in a restless pursuit of the favour of men, and in seeking worldly peace; yet to this day (though born enemies to God) never spent one day, it may be not one hour, in mourning after the Lord for favour from him, nor care not for it, unless it be upon their own terms, *viz* that God would be at peace with them; but they may still remain quietly in their sins and war against God; and thence it is, that the Lord will shortly take away peace from the whole earth, and plague the world with war and bloodshed: & as it is in Zech. 11. 6. *Deliver every man into the hand of his neighbour, and into the hand of his king, and they shall smite the Land;* even for this very cause, for despising the peace and reconciliation with God, you might and should have accepted in the gospel of peace.

S E C T. III.**Thirdly, Adoption.**

THIS is the third benefit, which in order of nature follows our reconciliation, whereby the Lord accounts us sons, and gives us the spirit and privilege of sons: for in order, we

must be first beloved before we can be loved so as to be accounted sons, *1 Job. 3. 1, 2.* For the Lord is unjust to account us *just* in our justification is much; but for the Lord to account us *hereby* as *friends*, this is more: but to account us *sons* also, this is a higher degree and a farther priviledge; and hence, our adoption follows our faith; *John 3. 12. Gal. 3. 26.* and if adoption, then the spirit of adoption much less doth not precede faith. By Christ's active obedience (our divines say) we have right unto life; by adoption we have a farther right; the one destroys not the other; for a man may have right unto the same thing upon sundry grounds: we know there are two sorts of sons:

- 1. Some by nature, born of our own bodies, and thus we are not sons of God, but children of wrath.
- 2. Some by adoption which are taken out of another family, and accounted freely of us as our sons; and thus *Moses* was for a time the son of *Pharaoh's* daughter. And of this son-ship by adoption I now speak, the Lord taking us out of the family of hell to be his adopted sons. Christ is God's Son by eternal generation, *Adam* by creation; all believers are sons by adoption. Now adoption is two-fold.

1. External, whereby the Lord takes a people by outward covenant and dispensation to be his sons, and thus all the Jews were God's first-born, *Exod. 4. 23.* and unto him did belong the adoption, *Rom. 9. 4, 5.* And hence their children were accounted sons, as well as saints, and holy, *1 Cor. 7. 14. Ezek. 16. 20, 21.* but many fall from this adoption, as the Jews did.

2. Internal.

2. Internal, whereby the Lord out of everlasting love, to particular persons in special, he takes them out of the family of satan, and by internal love and special account reckons them in the number of sons; makes them indeed sons, as well as calls them so, *Isai. 56. 5.* *Isaac* by special promise was accounted for the seed, *Rom. 9. 8.* and of this we now speak. Now this is double.

1. Adoption begun, *1 Joh. 3. 1, 2.* now we are the sons of God. To some of which, (tho' sons indeed) yet the Lord behaves himself toward them for some time, and for special reasons, as unto servants, exercising them with many fears, *Gal. 4. 1, 2.* some spirits will not be the better for the love of their Father, but worse; and therefore the Lord keeps a hard hand over them: to others, the Lord behaves himself with more special respect, in making them cry with more boldness, *Abba Father, Rom. 8. 15, 16.* who will be more easily overcome, and bent to his will by love.

2. Adoption perfected, when we shall receive all the privileges of sons, not one excepted, *Rom. 8. 23.* where we are said to wait for our adoption, the redemption of our bodies: by the first we are sons, but not seen nor known such, *1 John 3. 1, 2.* By the second, we shall be known before all the world to be such: we now speak principally of adoption begun, whereby we are sons in God's account, and by real reception of the spirit of sons: the manner of this adoption is thus.

1. God loves Jesus Christ with an unspeakable love, as his only Son, and as our elder brother.

2. Hence when we are in Christ his son, he loves us with the same love, as he doth his own Son.

3. Hence the Lord accounts us sons, *Eph. 1.5,6.* God's love is not now toward us as to *Adam* his Son by creation, *viz.* immediately diffused upon us; but in loving his own Son immediately, hence he loves us, and hence adopts us, and accounts us children.

Oh that the Lord would open our eyes to see this privilege; *Behold it*, saith *John*, *1 John 3. 1.* Stand amazed at it, that children of wrath shou'd become the sons of the most high God; for a beggar on the dunghill, a vagabond, runnagate from God, a prodigal, a stranger to God, whom the Lord had no cause to think on, to be made a son of God almighty.

If sons, then the Lord doth prize and esteem you as sons: if a man hath twenty sons, he esteemeth the poorest, least, sick child he hath, more than all his goods and servants, unless he be an unnatural father; I tell you that the least of you, the poorest and most feeble believer, is accounted of God, and more esteemed than all his household stuff: then heaven, earth, and all the glory in it, and all the kings & great men in the world: *1sa. 43.4,5,6.* not because thou hast done any thing worthy of this, but only because he accounts thee freely as his son.

If sons, then the Lord surely will take care for you as for sons; a godly father hath a double care of his children. First, of their temporal, Secondly, and chiefly of their eternal estate; we are ready to question in times of want, what we shall eat, drink, how we shall live; Oh consider, art thou a son of God, and will not he that *feeds the ravens, and cloaths the lillies*, *Mat. 6. 31, 32.* provide for thee? Yes verily, he will take care for thy temporal

ral good. It is true, you may be brought into outward straits, wants, miseries, yet then the Lord is thereby plotting for thy eternal good, for hence come all God's corrections, *Deut. 8. 5. Heb. 12. 8.* the Lord took all they had from them by their enemies in war, and carried them away captive into a strange land, yet *Jer. 24. 5.* this was for their good; we think the Lord many times takes no care for us, and so make him of a worse nature than the savage beasts, or bloody men toward their young, but this is certain, he never denies any thing to us in outward things, but it is to further our eternal bliss with him, to do us good in our latter end: what say godly parents? it is no matter what becomes of my children, when I am dead, if the Lord will but give them himself to be their portion; if at last they may see the Lord in glory: do not wonder then if the Lord keeps you short sometimes.

If sons, then he loves you as sons, as a father doth his sons; you think the Lord loves you not, because you do not alway feel his love, nor know his love; is thy son not thy child, because while it is young, it knows not the father that begat it, or because thou art sometime departed from it, and hast it not alway in thine own arms? *Israel saith, My God hath forsaken me and forgotten me, Isai. 49. 14.* and yet no mother tenders her child, as the Lord did them; you think because you have so many sins and afflictions one upon onother, that the Lord loves you not: judge righteously, hath thy child no father because it is sick long together, and therefore kept under a spare dyet? no, he knows our mold, and that we are but dust, and freely

freely chuses us to be his sons, and hence loves notwithstanding all our sins, *Psal. 89. 32. 33.* if he sees *Ephraim* bemoaning his stubbornness, as well as his sickness, and weakness, *Jer. 31.20.* doth the Lord profess, *Is he not my only Son.*

4. If sons, then we are heirs and co-heirs with Christ, saith the apostle, *Rom. 8. 17.* Sons by nature are not always heirs, but all sons by adoption are: we are heirs with Christ, the Lord Christ as our elder brother manageing all our estate for us, because unable to do it our selves; we are heirs, 1. of the kingdom of glory, *1 Pet. 1. 4,5.* 2. Heirs of all this visible world, *1 Cor 3.22.* not that we have the whole world in our own hand (it would be too cumbersome to us to manage) but the Lord gives us the rent of it, the blessing and good of it, though it be possessed by others. 3. We are heirs of the promise, *Heb. 11. 9.* and *6. 17.* whereby Jehovah himself comes to be our inheritance and portion for ever; and look as Christ was in the world and heir of all, though trod under foot by all, so are we; what can we desire more?

5. If sons, then we have, and shall ever have the spirit of sons, *Rom. 8. 15, 16.* And what are we the better for this spirit? truly hereby, First, we cry unto him, we are enabled to pray who could not pray before, because guilt stopt our mouths. Secondly we cry *Abba Father*, and this spirit witnesseth that we are sons of this Father: it is not said that it witnesseth to our spirits, but it witnesseth with our spirits, i. e. our renewed conscience, thus; all believers called and justified of God are sons, but I am such a believer, therefore I am a son, now the spirit bears

bears witness with us in every part, both premises and conclusion, only it being the clearest and strongest witness, it testifies the same thing our consciences do, but yet more clearly, more certainly, more comfortably and sweetly, ravishing the soul with most unspeakable peace and joy, especially in the conclusion. I know there is a *Noetic* testimony, but it is lastly resolved into this; I'll not now dispute it, only this is certain: that this testimony all the sons of God have by means of their adoption. They may not indeed sometime hear it; if they do, they may object against it through the unbelief in part remaining in them; or if it be sometimes suspended, what you want in the witness and comfort of it, you have it in the holiness of it; and therefore the spirit sealing is called *the holy Spirit*. Eph. 4. 30. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7, 8. and is not this a great privilege? Rom. 8. 14. Thirdly, hereby you are led and guided, and that continually toward your last end. For as if *Adam* had stood, he shouid have had the spirit of God, this very spirit to have kept him and all his posterity from falling at any time from God, so Christ having stood for us, justified us before God; sends the immutable constant assistance of the spirit in adoption, which though it doth not alway quicken us, nor comfort us, nor assure us, &c. yet it is every moment guiding and leading of us unto our utmost end. From hence it is, that the same sins which harden others, at last humble us, the same temptations by which others fall and perish, serve at least to purify us; hence our decay in grace leads us to growth at last, hence our fears and doubts serve to establish at least, hence our wildrings from

from God, for a time, make us esteem more of the presence and ways of God at last ; because the spirit of adoption is that by which we are led, and constantly assisted and carried toward our latter end : Oh mourn thou that art as yet no son, but a slave to satan, and unto thy filthy lusts ; a servant at best, working for wages only, and fear of the whip, who shalt not alway abide in God's house as sons shall do : nay it may be hast hated and reviled the sons of God ; time shall come that you shall wonder at their glory, who are not known now.

S E C T. IV.

Fourthly, *Sanctification.*

THIS is the fourth benefit which follows in order of nature, our justification, reconciliation, & adoption, for upon our being sons in adoption, we receive the image of our heavenly Father in sanctification ; because we are under grace. Hence it comes to pass that we are freed from the reigning power of sin, Rom 6. 14. so that our sanctification follows our justification, and adoption goes not before it. In justification, we have the love and righteousness of the Son ; in reconciliation, the love of the Father ; in adoption, the image of a Father and presence of the spirit assisting, witnessing ; in sanctification, the image of our Father by the same spirit : and this I conceive,

with submission is *the seal of the spirit* mentioned, *Eph. 1.13.* the *seal sealing*, is the spirit it self; the *seal sealed*, consists first in the expression of it in adoption; secondly, in the impression of it in sanctification; and that he only shall pass as current coin, that hath both these; I know the most full and clear expression and testimony of the spirit is after all God's work is finished in glorification, but the beginning of it is here in Adoption, a fuller measure of it in sanctification; God's seal is ever set to some purpose (as mens seals to some bond, not to blanks) the Lord's promise of actual justification, and reconciliation, pertains only to men sanctified or called: in adoption therefore we receive the spirit, which looks both ways; testifying either thou sanctified, art justified, or thou called, art justified and reconciled.

I speak not now of external sanctification by outward shew and profession, and common illumination and operation of the spirit *upon men*, from which many fall away, *Heb. 10. 29.* but of internal and special; the nature of which, you may best conceive in these three degrees.

1. It is the *renewing of a man*, *Tit. 3. 5.* So that by it a man is morally made a new man, another man *All things are become new*; *2. Cor. 5. 27.* he hath new thoughts, new opinions of things, new desires, new prayers, and praises, new dispositions, regeneration not differing from it.

2. It is a *renewing of the whole man*, *1. Thes. 5. 23.* For as every part and faculty of man is corrupt by the first *Adam*, so they are renewed by the second *Adam*; not that we are perfectly renewed in this life by Christ, as we are corrupt by *Adam*, but in part

part in every faculty, Rom. 6. 19. and from hence ariseth our spiritual combat and warfare with sin, yea with all sin ; it is not because of our sanctification simply (for if it were perfect, we should war and wrestle no more ;) but from the imperfection of it. And this renewal in part, is in every part, even in the whole man : and as the first *Adam* propagates sin chiefly and radically in the soul, especially into the heart of man ; and from thence it diffuseth it self like leaven into the whole lump of our liyes, so the Lord Jesus chiefly communicates this renewal into our hearts, and thence it sweetens our lives ; and hence it is call'd *the inner man*, Rom. 7. 22. Eph. 3. 16. You see a little holiness in a christian ; I tell you, if he be of the right make, there is a kind of infinite endless holiness within him from whence it springs, as there is a kind of infinite endless wickedness in a wicked man, from whence his sins spring : if a man be outwardly holy, but not within, he is not sanctified, no more than the painted sepulchres of the proud Pharisees ; if any man say his heart his good, though he makes no shew in his life, he speaks not the truth, if the apostle may be believed, 1 Joh. 1. 6 for sanctification is the renewal of the whole man, within and without ; it is not for a man to have his teeth white, and his tongue tipty, and his nails pared ; No, no, the Lord makes all new where he comes.

3. It is a renewal unto the image of God, or of God in Christ ; an unsanctified man may be after a sort renewed in the whole man, his outward conversation may be fair, his mind may be enlightened, his heart may taste of the heavenly gift, &c. &c. Heb.

Heb. 6. 4, 5. he may have *a form of godliness*, 2 Tim. 3. 5. he may have strong resolutions within him unto godliness, Deut. 5. 29. and hence with the five foolish virgins may be received into the fellowship of the wise, and not discerned of them neither, till the gate is shut ; but they are never renewed in *their* whole man *after the image of God* : i. e. they do not know things, and judge of them as God doth, they do not love and will holiness and the means thereto, as God doth ; they hate not sin, as God doth ; they do not delight in the whole law of God, it is not writ in their hearts, and hence they love it not as God doth : and this is the cut of the thread between a sanctified and unsanctified spirit ; by sanctification a man is renewed unto God's image, once lost, but here again restored, Epb. 4. 24. Job. 1. 16. we receive from Christ grace for grace, as the seal on the wax hath tittle for tittle, to that in the seal it self, we are changed into the same image of Christ by beholding him, in the glass of the gospel, by faith ; 2 Cor. 3. 18. *I delight in the law of my God in my inward man*, Rom. 7. 23. And hence a christian by the life of sanctification, lives like unto God ; at least hath *a* holy disposition and inclination (the habits of holiness) so to do ; Gal. 2. 19. *I live unto God, he calleth us from darkness into his marvellous light, that we might shew forth his virtues* ; and that this is true sanctification, may thus appear ; because our sanctification is opposed to our original corruption, as our justification to our original and contracted guilt of sin : now as original corruption is the defacing of God's image by contrary dispositions to sinfulness, so our sanctification can

be nothing else but the removal of this pollution, by the contrary habits and dispositions to be like unto God again: our sanctification is to be holy, *Lev. 20. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 14, 15, 16.* our holiness hath no other primary pattern but God's holiness, so that our sanctification is not the righteousness and holiness as it is inherent in Christ, for that is the matter of our justification, and therefore sanctification must be that holiness which is derived unto us from Christ, whereby we are made like unto him; and thus Christ is made *sanctification unto us, 1 Cor. 1. 30.* There should be no difference between Christ our righteousness and sanctification, if that holiness which is in Christ should be *both* unto us. Hence also sanctification is not the immediate operation of the spirit upon us, without created habits of grace abiding in us, as the spirit that came upon *Balaam*, and mightily affected him for a time, but left him as destitute of any grace or change of his nature as the ass he rode on; No, no, it renews you unto the image of God himself, if you be truly sanctified. And therefore let all these dreams of the Familists (denying all inherent graces, but only those which are in Christ, to be in the saints) let them vanish and perish from under the sun, and the good Lord reduce all such who in simplicity are mis-led from this blessed truth of God. I will not now enter into the depth concerning the means of our sanctification, in mortification by Christ's death and vivification by the resurrection of Christ: this may suffice for explication of the nature of it.

Only see and for ever prize this priviledge, all you blessed souls, whom the Lord hath justified; thou

thou hast many sad complaints, what is it to me, if I be justified in Christ, and be saved at last by Christ, and my heart remain all this while unholy and unsubdued unto the will of Christ; that he should comfort me, and my holy heart be alway grieving of him; what though the Lord save me from misery, but saves me not from my sin; Oh consider this benefit. It is true, thou findest a woful, sinful nature within thee, cross and contrary unto holiness, and leading thee daily in captivity; yet remember the Lord hath given thee another nature, a new nature; there is something else within thee, which makes thee wrestle against sin; and shall in time prevail over all sin, *Mat. 12. 20.* this is the Lord's grace sanctifying of thee. Oh be thankful that the Lord hath not left thee wholly corrupt, but hath begun to glorify himself in thee, and to bless thee in turning thee from thine iniquities.

1. By this thou hast a most sweet and comfortable evidence of thy justification and favour with God; he that denys this, must (whatever distinctions he hath) abolish many places of scripture, especially the epistles of *James* and *John*, who had to do with some spirits, that pretended faith and union to Christ, and communion with him, and so long as it was thus, this was evidence sufficient to them of their justified estates. What saith *James*? thou sayst thou hast faith, shew it me then; prove it for my part, faith he: I'll prove by the blessed fruits and works which flow from it, as *Abraham* manifested his, *James. 2. 18, 22.* What saith *John*? You talk (faith he) of fellowship and communion with Christ, and yet what holiness is there

in your hearts or lives ; if you say you have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, you lie and do not the truth ; but if you walk in the light, then although your holiness, and confession, and daily repentance for sin doth not wash away sin, yet *the blood of Christ doth wash us*, 1 John 1. 6, 7. Again, you say you know Christ, and the love and good will of Christ toward you, and that he is the *propitiation for your sins* : how do you know this ? saith he : *He that saith, I know him, and keep not his commandments, is a liar*, 1 John 2. 4. True, might some reply, he that keeps not the commands of Christ, hath thereby a sure evidence that he knows him not, and that he is not united unto him ; but is this any evidence that we do know him, and that we are united to him, if we do keep his commandments ? Yes, verily, saith the apostle hereby *we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments*, ver. 3. and again, ver. 5. *Hereby know we that we are in him*, what can be more plain ? What a vanity is this to say that this is running upon a covenant of works ? Is not sanctification the *writing of the law in our hearts*, a special benefit of the covenant of grace as well as justification ? *Heb. 8. 10, 12.* and can the evidencing then of one benefit of such a covenant by another, be a running upon the covenant of works ? is it a truth contained in the covenant of grace, *viz.* that he that is justified is also sanctified, and he that is sanctified is also justified ? And is it an error against grace to see this truth ; that he that is sanctified is certainly justified ; and that therefore he that knows himself sanctified, may also know thereby that he is justified ? Tell me how you will know that you are justified ? You will say,

say, by the testimony of the spirit; and cannot the same spirit shine upon your graces, and witness that you are sanctified as well? *1 John 4. 13, 24.*
1 Cor. 2. 12. Can the spirit make the one clear to you, and not the other?

Oh beloved it's a sad thing to hear such questions and such cold answers also, that sanctification possibly may be an evidence; may be? is it not certain? Assuredly to deny it is as bad as to affirm that God's own promises of favour are true evidences thereof, and consequently, that they are lies and untruths; for search the scripture, and consider sadly, how many evangelical promises are made unto several graces, *i. e.* unto such persons as are invested with them; you may only take a taste from *Mat. 5. 3, 4, &c.* where our Saviour (who was no legal preacher) pronounceth, and consequently evidenceth blessedness by eight or nine promises, expressly made to such persons as had inherent graces of *poverty, mourning, meekness, &c.* there mentioned; the Lord Jesus leaving those precious legacies of his promises unto his children that are called by those names of *mourners, poor in spirit, pure in heart, &c.* that so every one may take, and be assured of his portion manifested particularly therein: that I many times wonder how it comes to pass, that this so plain and ancient principle of catechism (for so it was among the *Wales* many 100 years since) grounded on so many pregnant scriptures, should come to be so much as questioned in our days; sometimes I think it ariseth from some wretched lusts men have a mind to live quietly in; desirous to keep their peace, and yet unwilling to forsake their lusts; and hence they

exclude this witness of water, the witness of sanctification to testify in the court of conscience, whether they are beloved of God and sincere hearted or no, because this is a full witness against them, and tells them to their faces, that there is no peace to the wicked, *Isai. 57. ult. Deut. 29. 19, 20.* and that they have nothing to do to take God's name in their lips, that secretly hate to be reformed, *Psal. 50. 16.* In others I think it doth not arise from want of grace, but because the spirit of grace and sanctification runs very low in them ; 'tis so little that they can scarce see it by the help of spectacles ; or if they do, they doubt continually of the truth of it ; and hence because it can speak little, and that little very darkly and obscurely for them ; they have no great mind that it should be brought in as any witness for them. Others I think may have much grace and holiness, yet for a time cast it by as an evidence unto them, because they have experience how difficult and troublesome it is to find this evidence ; and when 'tis found, how troublesome to read it, and keep it fair, and thereby have constant peace and quietness ; & hence arise those speeches, Why do you look to your sanctification, a blotted evidence ? you may have it to day, and lose it to morrow, and then where is you peace ? and I do believe the Lord deprives many of his precious saints from the comfort of this evidence ; either because they look only to this, and not unto Christ, and their justification by faith, *Rom. 5. 1.* or else because there is some secret lust or guile of spirit, *Psal. 31. 1, 2.* which the Lord by sore and long shakings about their call and sanctification, would first winnow out, or because there is a perverse frowardness

frowardness of spirit, whereby because they feel not that measure of sanctification which they would, do therefore vilify, and so come to deny what indeed they have ; because they *feel a law of sin in their members, leading them away captive* : will not, with *Paul*, take notice of the law of their minds, whereby that *inner man delights in the law of God*, and mourns bitterly *under the body of death*, by which they might see with *Paul*, that there is *no condemnation* to such, *Rom. 8. 1.* To conclude, what ever is the cause of this crookedness of judgement, I do believe that the general cause is, want of attendance and standing unto the judgement of the scriptures in this controversy : for if this was stood unto, men would not produce their own experience, *viz.* that they could never find any evidence from sanctification, but they have met with it in another way, by the immediate witness of the spirit only ; nor would men cry it down, because grace being mixt with so much corruption, it can hardly be discerned, and so will be alway left in doubts, and that the heart is deceitful, and many that have evidenced their estates hereby, have been deceived : I confess thus the popish doctors argue against assurance of faith from the scriptures without special and extraordinary revelation ; but what is all this to the purpose if the scripture make it an evidence ? away then with thy corrupt experience, shall this be judge, or the scriptures rather ? what though many judging of themselves by marks and signs have been deceived ; yet if the scripture make it an evidence, (as we have proved) then, though men through their own weakness or wickednes have been deceived

in misapplying promises ; yet the scriptures cannot deceive you : What though it be difficult to discern Christ's grace in us ? yet if the scriptures will have us try our estates by that rule, which in it self is easy, but to our blindness and weakness, difficult many times to see ; who shall, who dares condemn the holy scriptures ? which as they shall judge us at the last day, should judge us now. Suppose that diverse books, and many ministers sometimes give false signs of grace and God's favour, yet doth the scripture give any ? I shall propose one thing to conscience, as the conclusion of this discourse : Suppose thou wert now lying upon thy death-bed, comforting thy self in the elected and justified estate ; suppose the spirit of God should now grapple with thy conscience, and tell thee, if thou art *justified*, then thou art *called and sanctified*, 2 Thes. 2. 13, 14. Is it thus with thee ? what wilt thou answer ? if thou say'st thou art not *sanctified*, the word and spirit will bear witness then against thee, and say, then thou art not *elected* nor *justified* ; if thou say'st thou knowest not, thou lookest not to *sanctification*, or fruits of the spirit, they will then reply, How then canst thou say that thou art *elected* or *justified* ? for it is a truth as clear as the sun, and as immovable as heaven and earth ; none are *elected and justified*, but they are also *sanctified*, and they that are not *sanctified* are not *justified*, Rom. 8.1. 13. And now tell me, how can you have peace, unless you make your faces like flint before the face of God's eternal truth, or heal your conscience by such a plainer as will not stick ? if therefore the Lord ever made

made sin bitter to thee, let holiness be sweet ; if continuance in sin hath been an evidence unto thee of thy condemnation, Oh let the riches of the grace of Christ in redeeming thee from the lamentable bondage and power of sin, be an evidence to thee of thy salvation : Oh bless God for any little measure of sanctification ; do not scorn or secretly despise this spirit of grace, as many in this degenerate age begin to do, saying, You look to graces and fruits, and marks, and signs, and a holy frame of heart and sanctification ; what is your sanctification ? Oh let it be the more precious to thee, mourning that thou hast so little, and blessing the God and Father of all grace for what little thou hast, wearing it as a bracelet of gold about thy neck, knowing hereby thou art *born of God*, and that *the whole world lieth in wickedness*, and shall perish without this, 1 John 5. 18, 19.

2. This is your glory and beauty, this is glorification begun ; what greater glory than to be like unto God ? to be like unto God is to be next to God : and therefore this is called glory, 2. Cor. 3. 18. *we are changed into the same image from glory to glory.* Every degree of grace is glory, and the perfection of glory in heaven consists chiefly in the perfection of grace ; what is the work of some men at this day but to cast reproach upon sanctification our glory ?

3. This will give you abundance of sweet peace, and therefore, Heb. 12. 11. it is called the *quiet fruit of righteousness* ; for from whence comes the sore troubles and continual doubts of God's favour in many mens consciences ? Is it not some decay or guile here ? Psal. 32. 1. 2. Is it not some boldness

boldness to sin ; that they walk not in fear, & therefore not in the consolation of the holy Ghost ? *Acts 9. 31.* Is it not their secret dalliance with some known sin, continued in with secret impenitency ? Is it not because they labour with some strong unmortified corruption, pride, or passions, that they are in daily pangs and throws of conscience for ? *Psal. 32. 1, to 4.* What was the rejoicing of *Paul* ? was it not that in all sincerity and simplicity he had his conversation among men, *2 Cor. 1. 12.* What was *Hezekiah's* peace when dying as he thought ? was it not this ; *Lord remember I have walked before thee uprightly.* *Isa. 38. 2, 3.* not that this was the ground of their peace, for that only is free grace in Christ, but this is the means of your peace, *John 14. 22, 23.* it's a cursed peace which is kept by looking to Christ, yet loving thy lust.

4. This is that which will make you fit for God's use, *2. Tim. 2. 20. 21.* a filthy unclean vessel is good for nothing till cleansed ; God will not delight to glorify himself much by an unsanctified person ; what is thy wife, children, friends, family, the better for thee, if thy heart remain unsanctified ?

5. A little holiness is eminently all, springing up to eternal life ; this little spring shall never cease running, but it shall fill heaven it self, and thy soul in it with abundance of glory, *John 4. 14.* and *7. 38.* You despise it because it is but little ; I tell you this little is eminently all, and contains as much as shall be poured out by thee so long as God is God : 'tis true, thou say'st it's weak, and oft foiled, and gives thee not compleat power and victory over all sin, yet know that this shall (like the house of David) grow stronger and stronger, and it shall

shall at last prevail, and the Lord will not break thee though thou art bruised by sin daily, until judgment come to victory ; and the prince of this world be judged, and thy soul perfected in the day of the Lord Jesus.

S E C T. V.

Fifthly, *Audience of all Prayers.*

THIS is the fifth benefit, which though it be a fruit of other benefits, yet I name it in special, because I desire it might be especially observed ; and I place it after our sanctification, because of David's speech ; *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer*, Psal. 66. 18. And that of the apostle, 1 John 3. 22. *We believe whatever we ask we receive, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight.* As the Lord hath respect to the prayers of his people, not only in regard of their justification, but in some sense in regard of their sanctification also ; a justified person polluted with some personal or common sins of the times, may want that audience and acceptance of his prayers I am now speaking of.

That God will hear all the petitions of his people, can there be a greater privilege than this ? yet this our Saviour affirms twice together, because it is so great a promise, than we can hardly believe it, John 14. 13. 14. *Whatsoever you ask the Father in my name, that will I do ; mark the scope of the*

the words, our Saviour had promised, that *he that believes in me shall do greater works than I have done*: now because this might seem strange and impossible, the Lord in those verses tells them how, for (saith he) *Whatsoever ye ask in my name that will I do for you*, I will do indeed all that is to be done, but yet, it shall be by means of your prayers; Christ did great works when he was upon the earth, but for him to do what ever a poor sinful creature shall desire him to do, what greater work of wonder can there be than this? *This is our confidence* (saith the apostle) *that what ever we ask according to his will, he heareth us*, I John 5. 15. The greatest question here will be, what are those prayers the Lord Jesus will hear? I confess many things are excellently spoken this way, yet I conceive the meaning of this great charter is fully express in those words, *In my name*. If they be prayers in Christ's name, they shall be heard, and it contains these three things.

1. To pray in Christ's name, is to pray with reliance upon the grace, favour and worthiness of the merits of Christ, thus this phrase is used, Mic. 4. 5. *To walk in the name of their God*, is in confidence of the authority, and excellency, and favour of their Gods, that they will bear them out in it; so to pray in Christ's name, is to pray for Christ's sake, thus, Eph. 2. 18. *Through him* (i.e. through his death and sanctification rested upon) *we have access with confidence unto the Father*, Eph. 3. 12. *In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence, by the faith of him*. There are three evils that commonly attend our prayers, when we see God indeed. 1. Shame and flight from God, the apostle faith

faith therefore, that by *faith in Christ we have access.* 2. If we do accede and draw near to him, there is a secret fear and straitness of spirit to open all our minds ; therefore saith he, *we have boldness,* the word signifies liberty of speech to open all our minds without fear or discouragement. 3. After we have thus drawn near, and opened all our desires and moans before God, we have many doubts *viz.* will the Lord hear such a sinner, and such weak, and imperfect, & sinful prayers ? and therefore he also affirms, that we have *confidence* and *assurance* of being heard ; but all this is *by faith in him* : for look as Christ hath purchased all blessing for us by his death, and hence makes his intercession for those things daily according to our need : so we are much more to rest upon, and make that satisfaction, the ground of our intercession ; because Christ's blood purchased this, therefore O Lord grant this.

2. To pray in his name, is to pray from his command, and according to his will ; as when we send another in our name, we wish him to say thus, Tell him that I desire such a thing of him, and that I sent you ; so it is here, and thus the phrase signifies, John 5. 43. *I am come in my Father's name,* i. e. by his authority and command, Deut. 18. 18, 19. To pray in Christ's name therefore, is to pray according to the will of Christ, & from the will of Christ ; when we take those words the Lord puts into our mouths, Hos. 14. 1, 2, 3. and desire those things only that the Lord commands us to seek, whether absolutely or conditionally ; according to his will revealed, and with submission to his will concealed, 1 John 5. 14. *What ever we ask*

according to his will, he hears us ; *Psal. 27. 8. Rom. 8. 26.* If you ask any thing not according to God's will, you come in your own name, he sent you not with any such message to the Father.

3. To pray in his name, is to pray for his ends ; for the sake and use of Christ, and glory of Christ ; thus the phrase is used, *Mat. 10. 41, 42.* To receive a prophet in the name of a prophet, i. e. for this end and reason, because he is a prophet. A servant comes in his master's name to ask something of another, when he comes, as from his command ; so also for his master's use : So when we pray for Christ's sake, i. e. for his ends, not our own ; these ever prevail, *Jam. 4. 3.* You ask and have not, because you ask amiss, to spend it on your lusts ; *John 12. 27, 28. Psal. 145. 18.* this is to ask in truth, to act for a spiritual end ; to make it our utmost end, a filèth from a special, peculiar, supernatural presence of the spirit of life : and consequently a spirit of prayer which is ever heard. And hence you shall observe, the least groan for Christ's ends is ever heard ; because it is the groaning of the spirit, because it is an act of spiritual life, the formality of which consists in this, that it is for God, *Gal. 5. 19.* the Lord cannot deny what we pray for Christ's ends, because then he should crush Christ's glory : and therefore let a christian observe, when he would have any thing of God that concerns himself, not to be solicitous so much for the thing, as to gain favour and nearness to God, and a heart subject unto God in a humble contentedness, to be denied as well as to be heard, and he shall undoubtedly find the thing it self ; a lust is properly such a desire (though for lawful things) wherein

wherein a man must have the thing because it pleaseth him, as when *Rachel* asked for children ; she must have them, else she must needs die : *Give us water that we may drink* was their bruitish cry, *Exod. 17. 1, 2.* not that we may live to him that gives it : holy prayers or desires (opposed unto lusts) are such desires of the soul, left with God, with submission to his will, as may best please him : now the Lord will hear the desires indeed of all that fear him, but not fulfill their lusts.

These three are the essential properties of such prayer as is heard, or if you will, of that which is properly or spiritually prayer : fervency, and assurance, &c. are excellent ingredients ; but yet the Lord may hear prayer without them : it is true, the Lord may sometimes not hear us presently, for our praying time is our sowing time, we must not look presently for the harvest. *The Lord bears the prayer of the destitute, Psal. 102. 17.* the original word is, of the *shrub*, or *naked place of the desert*, which the prophet saith, *Jer. 17. 6.* *Sees no good when good comes*, yet such as feel themselves such, the Lord doth regard them, and will have a time to answer them : and though the Lord may not give us the thing we pray for, nor as good a thing of the same kind, yet he ever gives us the end of our prayers ; he that is at sea and wants stiff winds to carry him to his port, yet hath no cause to complain, if the Lord secretly carries him in by a strong current of the sea itself ; and it is certain at the end of all God's dealing with you, you shall then see how the Lord hath not failed to answer you in any one particular, *Josh. 23. 14.*

Oh therefore see and be perswaded of this your privilege, that God will now hear every prayer ; many make a question, How may we know when the Lord grants out any blessing as an answer to prayer ? many things are said to this purpose ; but the simplicity and plainness of the answer lies in this, *viz.* If it be a prayer, God hears it ; if it be put up in Christ's name, it is then a prayer : and that you may believe this, and glory in this, consider these reasons only, to confirm this truth.

1. From the promise of Christ as in this place, *John 14. 13, 14.* which was a promise in special to be accomplished when he came to his kingdom ; and therefore, though it is true, God's grace is free, and therefore you think the Lord may as well refuse to hear you, as hear ; yet consider that by his promise, he hath bound himself to hear.

2. From the fatherly disposition that is in God, *John 16. 26, 27.* and hence *he loves us*, and hence cannot but hear us.

3. Because all prayers put up in Christ's name, Christ makes intercession that they may be heard ; *Heb. 7. 25.* He hath laid down his blood, that all our prayers might be heard, (as we have proved) and indeed, hence ariseth the infinite efficacy of prayer, because it is built upon that which is infinitely and eternally worthy.

4. Because all prayers of the faithful arise from the spirit of prayer, *Rom. 8. 26.* because as that which is for the flesh, is of the flesh ; so that which is for the spirit or for the sake of Christ ; for spiritual ends, is ever of the spirit, *John 7. 18.*

5. Because of the glory of Christ, that the Father may be glorified in the Son : cannot Christ be

be glorified unless he hear all prayers ? yes he could, but yet his will is to reveal his glory by this means ; so that though thou and thy prayers be vile, and therefore deservest no acceptance, nor answer, yet remember that his glory is dear ; it is the glory of kings to hear some requests and petitions but they cannot hear nor answer all ; it is the glory of Christ to hear all, because he is able, without the least dishonour to himself thus to do.

Oh be perswaded of this, how should your joy then be full, how should you then delight to be oft with him, how would you then encourage all to come unto him, how would you then be constrained to do any thing for him, who is ready to do all for you ? but oh, woe unto our unbelief for that which (the apostle saith, 1. John 5. 14.) was ground of his confidence, *viz.* that *what ever we ask according to his will, he hears us,* is no ground to us, and we may say, and mourn to think, this is our diffidence, that *what ever I ask according to Christ's will, he hears me not :* but Oh recover from such a distrustful frame, and from all dead-heartedness in this duty *without*, lest the Lord send task-masters and double our bricks, and then we groan, and sigh, and cry, and learn to pray that way, that will not pray nor believe now. If the Lord will but give us hearts, assuredly you might not only rule your selves and families, but by the power of prayer pull down, and raise up kingdoms, dispose of the greatest affairs of the church, nay of the world, you might hereby work wonders, by means of him who ruling all things yet is overcome by prayer, Hos. 12. 4, 5.

S E C T. VI.

Sixthly, *Glorification.*

THIS is the sixth and last priviledge and benefit, and you all know is the last thing in the execution of God's eternal purpose toward all his beloved and chosen ones; whom he hath predestinated, called, justified, them he hath also glorified, Rom. 8. 30. hereby we are made perfect in holiness, no more *sin* shall stir in us: perfect also in happiness; no more tears, nor sorrows, nor temptations, nor fears shall ever molest us, Heb. 12. 23. Rev. 14. 13. And all this shall be in our immediate communion with God in Christ, Col. 1. 28. John 17. 23, 24. *we shall be then* saith Paul, *for ever with the Lord*: if the Lord would but open our eyes, and give us one glimpse of this, what manner of persons should we be? how should we then live? how willingly then should we embrace faggots and flames, prisons and penury? the light afflictions here, would not they work for us glory? nay the apostle useth such a phrase which I believe may pose the most curious orator in the world to express to the life of it, *an exceeding weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. What is our life now but a continual dying, carrying daily about us that which is more bitter than a thousand deaths; what saith the apostle to us, Col. 3. 3. *You are dead, yet when Christ shall appear, you shall appear with him also in glory*; the general security of these times foretold by Christ (especially when churches become virgins, and people are seeking after purity of ordinances),

nances) it shall not be in a want of watchfulness against the present corruptions of the times somuch, as in a careless want of expectation of the coming of Christ in glory, not having *our loins girt, and lamps burning*, nor readines to meet the Lord in glory, *Mat. 25. 1 to 5, &c.* Oh that I were able therefore to give you a blush and a dark view of this glory, that might raise up our hearts to this work.

1. Consider the glory of the place : the Jews did and do dream still of earthly kingdom, at the coming of their *Messiah* ; the Lord dasheth those dreams, and telis them *His kingdom is not of this world*, and that he *went away to prepare a place for them, that where he is, they might be*, *John 14. 2, 3.* and *be with him to see his glory*, *John 17. 23, 24.* the place shall be the *third heaven*, called *our Father's house* ; built by his own hand with most exquisite wisdom, fit for so great a God to appear in his glory (*John 14. 2, 3.*) to all his dear children ; called also *a kingdom*, *Mat. 25. 31. Come ye blessed inherit the kingdom prepared for you*, which is the top of all the worldly excellency, called also *an inheritance*, *1 Pet. 1. 3.* which the holy apostle infinitely blesseth God for, as being our own and freely given to us, being our Father's inheritance divided among his sons, which is a greater priviledge than to be born an heir to all the richest inheritance on this earth, or to be Lord of all this visible world ; for this inheritance he tells us is, 1. *Incorruptable*, whereas *all this world waxeth old as a garment*. 2. *'Tis undefiled*, never yet polluted with any sin, no not by the angels that fell, for they fell in paradise, when guardians to man, whereas *this whole creation groaneth under the burden and bondage*.

dage of corruption, Rom. 8. 3. This never fadeth away ; 'tis not like flowers, whose glory and beauty soon withers, but this shall be most pleasant, sweet, and ever delightsome ; after we have been ten thousand years in it, as it was the first day we entred into it, (for this is the meaning of the word, and so it differs from *incorruptable*) whereas in this world (suppose a man should ever enjoy it, yet) there grows a secret satiety and fulness upon our hearts, as it grows common, and blessings of greatest price are not so sweet, as the first time we enjoy them ; they clog the stomach, and glut the soul ; but here our eyes, ears, minds, hearts shall be ever ravished with that admirable glory which shines brighter than ten thousand suns, the very fabrick of it being God's needle-work, (if I may so say) quilted with variety of all flowers in divers colours, by the exactest art of God himself, as the apostle intimates, Heb. 11. 10.

2. Consider of the glory of the bodies of the saints in this place ; the Lord shall change our *meile bodies*, which are but as dirt upon our wings, and clogs at our feet, as the apostle expresseth it, Phil 3. ult. Paul was in the third heaven, and saw the glory doubtless of some there, see what he saith of them, 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43. 44.

3. It shall be an *incorruptable body* ; it shall never die, nor rot again, no not in the least degree tending that way, it shall never grow weary, (as now 'tis by hard labour, and sometimes by holy duties) nor faint, nor grow, nor grow wrinkled and withered, *Adam's body in innocency potuit, non mori*, we say truly ; but this *non potest mori*, it cannot die : and hence it is, that there shall be no more sickness,

sickness, pains, griefs, faintings, fits, &c. when it comes there.

2. It shall be a glorious body, it shall *rise in honour*, saith *Paul*; and what glory shall it have? verily it shall be *like unto Christ's glorious body*, *Phil. 3. ult.* which when *Paul* saw, *Acts 9.* did *shine brighter than the sun*: and therefore here shall be no imperfection of limbs, scars, or smaines, natural or accidental deformities; but as the third heaven it self is most lightsome, *Gen. 1. 1, 2.* so their bodies that inhabit that place shall exceed the light and glory thereof, these being more compacted, and thence shining out in greater lustre, that the eyes of all beholders shall be infinitely ravished to see such clods of earth as now we are, advanced to such incomparable beauty and amiableness of heavenly glory.

3. It shall be a *powerful, strong body*; it is *sown in weakness* saith *Paul*: it shall *rise in power*; it shall be able to help forward the divine operations of the soul, which are now clogg'd by a feeble body; it shall be able to bear the weight of glory, the joy unspeakable, and full of glory, which our weak bodies cannot long endure here, but we begin to burst and break in pieces (like vessels full of strong spirits) with the weight and working of them; and therefore the Lord in mercy keeps us short now of what else we should feel; it shall be able to sing *Hallelujahs*, and give honour, glory, power, to the Lamb that sits upon the throne for evermore without the least weariness.

4. It shall be a *spiritual body*, our bodies now are acted by animal spirits, and being earthly and natural, grows, feeds, eats, drinkes, sleeps, and hath

hath natural affections and desires after these things and is troubled if it wants them ; but then these same bodies shall live by the indwelling of the spirit of God powered out abundantly in us, and upon us, and so acting our bodies and swallowing up all such natural affections and motions as those be here ; as Moses being with God in the mount forty days and nights, did not need any meat or drink, the Lord and his glory being all unto him ; how much more shall it be thus then ? I do not say we shall be spirits like the angels, but our bodies shall be spiritual, having no natural desires after any earthly blessing, food, raiment, &c. nor troubled with the want of them : and hence also the body shall be able as well to ascend up, as now it is to descend down ; as *Austin* shews by a similitude of lead, which some spirits can beat so small as to make it swim ; we are now earthly, and made to live on the earth, and hence fall down to the center ; but we are made then to be above for ever with the Lord, the Lord proceeding from imperfection to perfection, as the apostle here shews ; not first *spiritual*, and then *natural* ; but first that which is *natural*, (in this life,) and then that which is *spiritual*.

3. Consider the glory of the soul ; now we know but in part, and see but in part ; now we have joy at some times, and then eclipses befall us on a sudden ; but then the Lord shall be our everlasting light, *Isai. 60. 19.* then we shall see God face to face, *1. John 3. 1, 2.* we shall then know and see those things that have been hid, not only from the wicked ; but from the deepest thoughts of the saints themselves in this world, *2. Cor. 12. 4.* *Paul* saw

saw some things not fit to be uttered, or that he could not utter: we shall be swallowed up in those depths of grace, glory, immediate vision, God shall be all in all.

The souls shall now enjoy, 1. The accomplishment of all promises which we see not here made good unto us, 1 Cor. 15. 24. then you shall have restitution of all these at times of refreshing, wherein your sins shall be publickly blotted out from the presence of the Lord. *Act 3. 14.* If Joshua said, *Josb. 23. 14.* when the peoples warfare was ended, *See if the Lord hath been wanting in one word to you,* much more will the Lord Jesus say unto you then.

2. Then you shall receive a full answer to all your prayers, all that grace, holiness, power over sin, satan, fellowship with God, life of Christ, blessing of God, which you sought for, and wept for, and suffered for here, you shall then see all answered.

3. Then you shall find the comfort of all that you have done for God, *Rev. 14. 13.* your work in this sense shall follow you, you shall then infinitely rejoice, that ever you did any thing for God, that ever you thought of him, spake to him, and spake for him, that ever you gave any one blow to your pride, passions, lust, natural concupiscence, &c. you shall then enjoy the reward of all your sufferings, cares, sorrows for God's Christ, fastings, and days of mourning, whether publickly, or secretly for God's people, 2 Cor. 4. 17. the same glory God hath given Christ, the Lord shall at that time give unto you, *John 17. 22.* It shall not be with us there as it was with the wicked

ed Israelites, who when they came into the good land of rest, they then forgot the Lord and all his works past ; no, no, all that which God hath done for you in this world, you shall then look back, and see, and wonder, and love, and bless, and suck the sweet of, for evermore ; it's a fond weak question to think whether we shall know one another in heaven ; verily you shall remember the good the Lord did you here, by what means the Lord humbled you, by what ministry the Lord called you, by what friends the Lord comforted and refreshed you ; and there you shall see them with you ; do you think you shall forget the Lord and his works in heaven, which (it may be) you took little notice of, and the Lord had little glory for here ?

4. Consider the glory of the company and fellowship you shall have here ; 1. Angels, *Heb. 12. 23, 24.* they will love you and comfort you, and rejoice with you, and speak of the great things the Lord hath done for you, as they did on earth to the shepherds, *Luke 2. 10.* Be not afraid, saith the angel, *Mat. 28. 5.* I know you seek Jesus : so will they say then, be ever comforted you blessed servants of the Lord, for we know you are loved of the Lord [Jesus]. 2. Saints, you shall sit down with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* in the kingdom of God, be taken into the bosom of *Abraham*, into the bosom of all the children of *Abraham*, & there we shall speak with them of the Lord's wonders, of his Christ and kingdom, *Psal. 145. 11.* and every sentence and word shall be milk and honey, sweeter than thy life now can be unto thee ; we shall know and love, and honour one another exceedingly.

3. The

3. The man Christ Jesus : when *Mary* claspt about him, *John* 20. 17. Let me alone said he, touch me not, I am not yet ascended to my Father. As if he had said, (faith *Austin*) then shall be the place and time wherein we shall embrace one another for evermore. Never was husband and loving wife so familiar one with another, as the Lord Jesus will be (not carnally and in an earthly manner) but, in a most heavenly, glorious, yet gracious manner with all his saints ; *Come ye blessed*, will he then say to them ; we shall then ever be, not only *in* the Lord, but *with* the Lord, faith *Paul*, *1 Thes. 4. ult.* and *9. 10.* Just as *Moses* and *Elias* in his transfiguration, that talked with him, (which was a glimpse of our future glory) so shall we then *Luke 12. 37.* and you shall then see that love of his, that blessed bosom of love opened fully, which the apostle saith, *passeth knowledge*, *Eph. 3. 19.* I need not tell you of our fellowship with the Father, also when the Son shall give up the kingdom to him that he may be all in all.

5. Consider the glory of your work there ; which is only to glorify this God.

1. You shall then live like Christ in glory, *Rev. 4. 10, 11.* we shall speak and think all with glory, *1 John 3. 1, 2.* our strings shall be then raised up to the highest strain of sweet melody and glory.

2. You shall then bless him, *Eph. 1. 6.* and *4. 13.* and that with ravishment ; you shall come then to the full acknowledgement of the Son of God ; you shall see and say all this is the work and grace of Christ, and then shall cry out, Oh let all angels, saints ever bless him for this. What shall I speak any more ? You will say, Is this

Certain? Can this be so? Yes assuredly, for Christ is gone to prepare this place and glory for you, *John 14. 2, 3.* We have also the first fruits of this glory which we feel sometimes, whereby we see, and taste, and drink, and long for more of that joy unspeakable, and peace that passeth understanding, that triumph over the rage and working power of remaining corruption, that dark vision of God, and holy glorying and boasting in him as our everlasting portion, &c. which cannot be delusions and dreams which never feed, but ever leave the deceived soul hungry, but are realities & things indeed, which satiate the weary soul, and fill it up with the very fulness of God himself, *Eph. 3. 19.* and therefore 'tis certain that we shall have the harvest that thus taste of the first fruits, and the whole sum paid us faithfully that have already the earnest penny. The Lord also fits us for this, as the apostle disputes, *2 Cor. 5. 4, 5.* What means the Lord to deny our requests in many things as long as we live? what is his meaning not to let us see the accomplishment of many of his promises? is it because he is unfaithful? or because he would let us know there is a day of refreshing he hath reserved for us, and would have us look for, wherein we shall see it hath not been a vain thing for us to pray, or him to promise? why doth he afflict us, and keep us more miserable both by outward sorrows & inward miseries than any other people in the world? doth he not hereby humble us, empty us, wean us from hence, and make us as it were vessels big enough to hold glory, which we hope for in another world?

But

But you will say, Can this glory be thus great? We see 'tis certain it shall be so; but shall it be so exceeding great and endless? Yes, verily, because,

1. The price is great which is paid for it, *Eph. 1. 14.* 'tis a *purchased possession*, (by the blood of Christ we enter into the holy of holies). a price of infinite value must bring a kind of infinite glory.

2. We are by Christ nearer to God than angels are, whose glory we see is very great.

3. Shall not our glory be to set out the glory of Christ? *2 Thes. 1. 10.* and if so, then if his glory be exceeding great, ours must bear a due proportion, and be very great also.

4. Doth not God pick out the poor and vile things of the world, to be vessels of glory? *1 Cor. 1. 27.* and is not that an argument that he intends exceedingly to glorify himself on such, to raise up a most glorious building, where he lays so low a foundation?

5. Are not we loved with the same love as he hath loved Christ? *John 17. ult.* and shall not our glory abound then exceedingly?

6. Is not the torment and shame of the reprobates to be exceeding great and grievous? doth not God raise them up to make his power known? *Rom. 9. 23.* What then shall we think on the contrary of the glory of the saints, wherein the Lord shall set forth his power in glorifying them as he doth the glory of his power in punishing others? and therefore, *2 Thes. 1. 9.* the punishment of the wicked is express by separation of them from the glory of the Lord's power; because that in the glory of the saints, the Lord will (as I may

so say) make them as glorious as by his power ruled by wisdom he is able to make them.

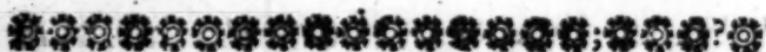
This is therefore the great glory of all those whom God hath called to the fellowship of his dear Son ; and which is yet more, blessed be God the time is not long, but that we shall feel what now we do but hear of, and see but a little of, as we use to do of things afar off : we are here but strangers, and have no abiding city, we look for this *that hath foundations* ; and therefore let sin press us down, and weary us out with wrestling with it ; let satan tempt, and cast his darts at us ; let our drink be our tears day and night, and our meat gall and wormwood ; let us be shut up in choaking prisons, and cast out for dead in the streets, nay upon dung-hills, and none to bury us ; let us live alone as pelicans in the wilderness, and be driven among wild beasts into deserts ; let us be scourged, and disgraced, stoned, fawn asunder, and burned ; let us live in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, (as who looks not for such days shortly ?) yet Oh brethren, the time is not long, but when we are at the worst, and death ready to swallow us up ; we shall cry out, Oh glory, glory, Oh welcome glory ! If our miseries here be long, they shall be light ; if very bitter, they shall be short ; however, long or short, they cannot be to us long, who look for an eternal weight of glory. Who wou'd not (that considers of these things) despise this world, and set it at his heels, who hath all these priviledges and benefits with Christ in his eye ? who would not abhor a filthy lust, to enjoy such a Christ ? who would ever look back upon his flesh-pots, or fathers house, that

that hath such welcome made him the first moment he comes to the Lord Jesus, in having present fruition of some of these benefits, but present right unto all; fruition of some by feeling, of all by faith. But Oh the wrath of God upon these times, that either see not this glory, or if they do, despise so great salvation! Christ, and pardon, and peace, adoption, grace, and glory it brought home to our doors, but their price is fallen in our market, and we think it better to be without Christ with our lusts, than to be in Christ with his benefits. The *reproach of Christ* was dearer to *Moses* (as great a courtier, and as strong a head-piece as our times can afford) than *all the riches and honours of Egypt*, but the grace, and peace, and life, and glory of *Jesus Christ*, is viler to us than the very onions, and leeks, and flesh-pots of *Egypt*; if you had but naked Christ (our life) for a prey in these evil times, you had no cause to complain, but infinitely to rejoice in your portion; but when with Christ you shall find all these benefits, and privileges coming in as to your portion, and yet to despise him? Assuredly the Lord will not bear with this contempt alway: away to the mountains, and hasten from the towns and cities of your habitation, where the grace of Christ is published, but universally despised; you blessed called ones of the Lord Jesus; for the days are coming, wherein for this sin, the heavens and earth shall shake, the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, and mens hearts failing for fear of the horrible plagues which are coming upon the face of the earth. Dream not of fair weather, expect not better days, till you hear men

Z. 3.

say,

Say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, who thus blesseth his with all spiritual blessings in Christ, Eph. 1. 3. I now proceed to the last.



C H A P. III.

All those that are translated into this blessed Estate, are bound to live the Life of Love in all fruitful and thankful Obedience unto him that hath called them, according to the Rule of the moral Law, Psal. 40. 7, 8.

THE Lord doth no sooner call his people to himself, but as soon as ever he hath thus crowned them with these glorious privileges, and given them any sense and feeling of them, but they immediately cry out, Oh Lord, what shall I do for thee? how shall I now live to thee? they know now they are no more their own, but his, and therefore should now live to him.

If you ask Moses, after all the love and kindness the Lord hath shewn Israel, what Israel should do for him? you shall see his answer full, Deut. 10. 12, 13. And now O Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, and love him and serve him with all thy heart, and to keep his commandments which I command thee this day for thy good?

If you ask Paul (as evangelical a christian as ever lived), what now we are to do when we are

in Christ? he answers punctually, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. *The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that Christ dying for those that were dead, they that live shall not live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them and rose again.*

If we ask Peter the question, to what end the Lord hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light? he expressly tells you, it is to shew forth the vertues of him that hath so called us, 1 Pet. 2. 9.

If we be doubtful whether this be the Lord's mind, the Lord himself resolves it by Zechariah, Luke 1. 74. and tells us, that 'tis his oath, *That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we should serve him without fear in holiness (in all the rules of the first table), and righteousness (in all duties of the second table) all the days of our life,* and that all this should not be out of a spirit of bondage and slavish fear, but without fear, i. e. fear of our enemies, sin, death, wrath, and so consequently out of love to him that delivered us; that one would wonder it should ever enter into the heart of any christian man that hath tasted the love of Christ, as to think that there is no use of the law to one in Christ; and that because they are to live the life of joye to Christ, that therefore they are not to look to the law as the rule of their love, expressly cross to the letter of the text, John 14. 15. *If ye love me, keep my commandments;* which commandments are not only faith and love to the saints; but love to enemies, and spiritual obedience unto the moral law, in a far different manner and measure than as the Pharisees instructed the people in those days; as you may see, Mat. 5. 17. 'Tis true indeed; obedience to the law.

law is not required of us now as it was of *Adam* ; it was required of him as a condition antecedent to life, but of those that be in Christ it is required only as a duty consequent to life, or as a rule of life, that seeing he hath purchased our lives in redemption, and actually given us life in vocation and sanctification, we should now live unto him, in all thankful and fruitful obedience according to his will revealed in the moral law. 'Tis a vain thing to imagine that our obedience is to have no other rule but the spirit, without any attendance to the law ; the spirit indeed is the efficient cause of our obedience, and hence we are said to be *led by the spirit*, Rom. 8. 14. but it is not properly the rule of our obedience, but the will of God revealed in his word, especially in the law is the rule : the spirit is the wind that drives us in our obedience, the law is our compass : according to which it steers our course for us : the spirit and the law, the wind and the compass, can stand well together, Psal. 143. 10. *Teach me to do thy will O God*, (there is *David's* rule, *viz.* God's will revealed) *thy spirit is good* (there is *David's* wind, that enabled him to steer his course according to it) *the spirit of life doth free us from the law of sin and death*, but not from the holy, and pure, and good, and righteous law of God, Rom. 8. 1, 2, 3. *The blood of Christ by the spirit cleanseth us from dead works, to serve the living God*, Heb. 9. 14. not to serve our own selves, or lusts, or wills, to do what we please : the law indeed is not a rule of that *by which* we are to obey, *viz.* of our faith, yet it is the only rule of *what we are to obey* : we are not to perform acts of obedience now as *Adam* was to do, *viz.* by the

sole.

sole power of inherent grace, but we are to live by faith, and act by faith (for *without me you can do nothing*, John 15. 5.) we are not united to Christ our life by obedience as *Adam* was to God by it, but by faith : and therefore as all action (in living things) comes from union, so all our acts of obedience are to come from faith, from the spirit on Christ's part, and from faith on our part, which make our union : *Noah* built by faith, *Enoch* walked with God by faith, *Joshua* and his soldiers fought by faith, *Abraham* traveled, dwelt in his tents, lived and died by faith ; they acted according to the rule, but all by the power of faith. It is a weak reasoning to imagine a man is not bound to pay his debts because he is to go unto another for the money : obedience is our debt we owe to Christ, Luke 17. 10. though we are to go to Christ, poor, and weak, and feeble, to enable us to pay :

Tis true, Christ hath kept the law for us, and are we therefore free from it as our rule ? No verily, Christ kept the law for satisfaction to justice, and so we are not bound to keep the law ; he kept the law also for imitation, to give us a copy and an example of all holiness and glorifying God in our obedience ; and thus Christ's obedience is so far from exempting us from the law, as that it ingageth us the more, having both rule and example before us, 1 John 2. 6. *He that saith he abideth in him ought to walk as he walked*, 1 Pet. 1. 14, 15, 16. Tis true, the law is writ in a believer's heart, and if he hath a law within, what need he (say some) look to the law without ? when as our Saviour and *David* argued quite contrary, Psal. 40. 7, 8. *I come, I delight to do thy will*, it being written of me that I should

should do it, because thy law is within my heart ; this argues, that you are not to attend the law unwillingly, as bond-men and slaves, but willingly and gladly, because the law, even the law of love is in your hearts, *1 John 5. 3.*

The place alledged by some for this liberty from the law, *viz. the law is not made for a righteous man, 1 Tim. 1. 9.* if well considered, fully dasheth this dream in pieces ; for there were divers Jewish preachers of Moses law, and they had a world of scruples and questions about it, *ver. 4.* and *Paul* and others were accounted of, as mere less zealous, because they did not sound upon that string so much ; away (saith *Paul*) with those contentious questions ; for the end of the commandment is not scruples and questions, but charity and love (*i. e.* both to God and man) out of a pure heart and faith unfeigned, *vers. 4.* and saith he ; *The law is very good, when used lawfully,* that is, for this end, and out of these principles, *ver. 8.* 'tis not talking, but doing, and that out of love, which is the end and scope of the law ; so that note by the way, you may as well abolish love as abolish the law, love being the end and scope of the law. But to proceed ; *The law is not made* (saith he) *for the righteous, i. e.* for the condemnation of the righteous, *i. e.* of such as out of a pure heart and faith unfeigned, love God in the first table, love to shew all duties of respect to man in the second table ; & therefore they of all other men have no cause to abolish the law, as if it was a bugbear, or a thing that could hurt them, but it's made for the condemnation of the lawless *Antinomians*, (as the original word is) or if you will, *Antinomians*, (transgressors of the first command) and.

and disobedient (transgressors of the second command,) for *ungodly* and *sinners* (transgressors of the third command,) for *unholie and profane* (transgressors of the fourth command,) for *murderers of fathers and mothers* (of the fifth,) for *man-slayers* (of the sixth,) for *whoremongers and defilers of mankind* (of the seventh,) for *man-stealers* (of the eighth,) for *liars* (of the ninth,) and for those that *in any thing walk contrary to sound doctrine*, the purity of the law and will of God (of the tenth.) So that this place is far from favouring any of those that run in this channel of abolishing the law as our rule; no beloved, the love of Christ will constrain you to embrace it as a most precious treasure. It is the observation of some, that in the preface to the moral law, *Exod. 20. 1, 2.* the Lord reveals himself to be *the Lord their God which bro't them out of the land of Egypt*; the very scope of which words, is to perswade to a reverend receiving and keeping of that good law: this law all nations are bound to observe, because he is *Jehovah the Lord*; but to be *thy God* in special covenant, and that *redeemed thee from Egypt*, and from that which was tipified by it, this belongs to none but unto them especially, that are already the people of God; and therefore of all other people in the world, they are bound to receive it as their rule; for obedience doth not make us God's people, or God our God: but he it first our God, (which is only by the covenant of grace) and thence it is, that being ours, and we his, we of all others, are most bound to obey.

To conclude, they that stick in these briars, therefore cry down the law as a christian's rule, because

cause by this means a christian shall find no peace ; because he is continually sinning against this law ; the law therefore say they, will be always troubling of him.

I answer, first a corrupt heart and putrid conscience, can have no peace by the law ; Isai. 57. 21. *There is no peace to the wicked*, and it is good it should be so.

2. A watchful christian may, Psal. 119. 15. *Great peace have they that love thy law*. Hezekiah had it, when he desired the Lord to remember how he had walked before him with a perfect heart, Isai. 58. 1, 2, 3. Paul found it, the testimony of his conscience bearing him witness, was his rejoicing herein, 2 Cor. 1. 12.

3. If a christian ignorant of maintaining his peace with God by faith in his justification, notwithstanding all the errors in his obedience and sanctification ; if I say he wants his peace, shall we therefore break the law in pieces ? if a secure christian that walks loosely want peace, by the accusations of the law ; 'tis God's mercy to him to give him no peace in himself, while he is at truce with his lust.

4. That peace will end in dismal sorrow which is got by kicking against the law, it is but daubing for a man to keep his peace by shutting his eyes against the way of peace ; a servant may have peace in his idleness by thinking that his master requires no work from him, and by hiding his talent, yet what will the Lord say to him when his day is ended, and he comes to reckon with him at sun-set ? bring the law into thy conscience in point of justification, it will trouble conscience : for

for there only Christ's righteousness, God's grace, and the promise are to be looked on, and our own obedience and holiness laid by in the dust ; but bring it before thee as a rule of thy sanctification, and as thy copy to write after, and to imitate, and aspire after that perfection it requires, it will then trouble thee no more, than it doth a child, who having a fair copy set him to write after, and knowing that he is a son, is not therefore troubled, because he cannot write as fair as his copy ; he knows if he imitates it, his scribbling shall be accepted : howsoever though his father may chastise him with rods, if he be careless to imitate ; yet he will never cast him therefore off from being his son. The truth is this, it argues a most graceless, carnal, wretched heart, for a man to cast by God's rules, because attendance to them is his trouble and torment, which unto a gracious heart are life and peace, and sweetness ; *All the ways of wisdom to him, are ways of pleasantness, and her paths peace, Prov. 3. 17.* And it is God's common curse upon them that love not the truth in these days, that because sin is not their sorrow, nor breach of rules their trouble ; that therefore, the observance of the law and attendance unto rules shall be their burden and trouble, they feel not the plague in their own hearts, and therefore reproofs plague them, and commands are a plague and a torment to them : crooked feet, & crooked wills, make men tread awry in such corrupt opinions.

All the called ones of God are therefore to live this life of obedience, and that out of love, which I call the life of love, *Gal. 5. 6.* for else circum-

cision avails nothing, nor uncircumcision, no nor ~~faith~~ itself ; unless it be of this nature, as that it works by love : there is much obedience and external conformity to the law in many men, but the principal difference between these formalities, and the obedience of the saints, is love ; the obedience of the one ariseth from self love, because it pleaseth themselves, and suits with their own ends ; the other from the love of Christ, because it pleaseth him, and suits with his ends ; *1 Cor. 13. 4, &c. 1 John 5. 3.*

Ques. Wherein doth and should this life of love appear ?

Answe. In these five particulars.

1. In thinking and musing much on Christ and upon his love, and on what you shall do for him ; he that saith he loves another, and yet seldom thinks on him, or will seldom give him a good look when he meets him, certainly deceives himself ; the least degree of love, appears in thinking on what we love, because the *loving kindness* of God was better than life unto *David* ; hence he did remember him upon his bed, and meditate on him in the very night, *Psal. 63. 3, 6.* They that fear the Lord, i. e. with a son-like fear, where love is chiefly predominant, are such as think upon his name : *Mal. 3. 16. We have thought of thy loving kindness, Oh Lord, in thy temple, Psal. 48. 9.* Thou that canst spend days, nights, weeks, months, years ; and hast thy head all the time swarming with vain thoughts, and scarce one living thought of Christ, and his love, that didst never beat thy head, nor trouble thy self in musing, Oh what shall I do for him, nor in condemning thy self because thou doest so little,

little, verily thou hast not the least degree of this life of love.

2. In speaking and commanding of him : is it possible that any man should love another and not commend him, not speak of him ? if thou hast but a hawk or a hound that thou lovest, thou wilt commend it, and can it stand with love to Christ, yet seldom or never to speak of him nor of his love ; never to commend him unto others, that they may fall in love with him also ? you shall see the spouse, *Cant. 5. 9, 16.* when she was asked *what her beloved was above others ?* She sets him out in every part of him, and concludes with this, *He is altogether lovely, because thy loving kindness (saith David) is better than life, my lips shall praise thee, and I will bless thee while I live, Psal. 63. 3, 4.* Can it stand with this life of love, to be alway speaking about worldly affairs, or news at the best ; both week day and sabbath day, in bed and at board, in good company and in bad, at home & abroad ? I tell you it will be one main reason why you desire to live, that you may make the Lord Jesus known to your children, friends, acquaintance, that so in the ages to come his name might ring, and his memorial might be of sweet odour, from generation to generation ; *Psal 71. 18.* if before thy conversion especially thou hast poisoned others by thy vain and corrupt speeches ; after thy conversion thou wilt seek to season the hearts of others by a gracious, sweet, and wise communication of savory and blessed speeches ; what the Lord hath taught thee thou wilt talk of it unto others, for the sake of him whom thou lovest.

3. In being oft in his company, and growing up thereby into a familiar acquaintance with him ; can we be long absent from those we love intirely, if we may come to them ? can we love Christ, and yet be seldom with him, in word, in prayer, in sacraments, in christian communion, in meditation and daily examination of our own hearts, in his providences of mercies, crosses and trials ? (for Christ is with us here, but those two ways, in his ordinances, or providences, by his holy Spirit, Lord (saith David) I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth, Psal. 26. 8. The ground of which is set down, verse 3. Thy loving kindness is before mine eyes, my soul longeth for thee as in a land where no water is, that I might see thee, as I have seen thee in the sanctuary ; the reason of it was, because thy loving kindness is better than life, Psal. 63. 1, 2, 3.)

4. In doing much for him, and that willingly ; did not Jacob love Rachel ? how did he express it ? his seven years service, in frost and snow, in heat and cold, by day and night were nothing to him, for her sake whom he loved ; Shall I serve the Lord (saith David) of what cost me nothing ? And when he had prepared many millions for the building of the temple, yet he accounted it a small thing for his sake whom he loved ; 1 Chron. 29. 3. he gave it out of his poverty, as he speaks ; this is love to keep his commandments, and those are not grievous, 1. John 5. 3.

5. In suffering and enduring any evil for his sake. I confess it is not every degree of love that will carry a man hither ; yet where there is great and singular love, for a good man one may be willing

to die, Rom. 5. 7. assured if there be any love to Christ, it will in time increase to this measure ; it will think ten thousand lives too little to lay down for Christ's sake, that laid down his precious life for him : *What tell you me faith-Paul, of bonds and imprisonments? I am ready not only to be bound, but to die for the sake of Christ at Jerusalem ; my life is not dear to me, no more than a rush at my foot, that I may finish my course with joy : For thy sake we are killed all the day long,* Rom. 8. 36, I tell you the love of Christ will make you fall down upon your knees, and bless the Lord, that he will accept of such a poor sacrifice as thy body is, though it be burnt to ashes ; and thou wilt bless him again and again, that whereas he might have left thee in thy sins to have trodden him and his glory and grace under foot, as he hath done thousands in the world ; yet that he should call thee to share in this honour not only to do, but to suffer for his sake.

Now the good Lord persuade all our hearts unto this fruitful obedience and life of love. Oh you young men you have a fair time before you to do much for Christ in ; how pleasing will it be to him to see such young trees hang full of fruit ! You aged men have now one foot in your grave, and you have forgotten the Lord Jesus most of your time, and your time which now remains is very little, and then your lamp is out, your sun is almost set, and all your work is yet to be done for Christ, Oh therefore awaken now at last before you awake when it is too late ; you rich men have abilities and wherewithall to set forward Christ's Kingdom in the towns and villages where-

you live; you poor men may do much by ardent and instant prayers day and night, for the advancement of the Lord Jesus. You husbands, wives, masters, servants, remember if you are not good in your places, you are not good at all, what ever your profession be; a good woman, but a forward wife; a good man, but a hair-brain'd curst husband; a good servant, but a very sore tongue; these cannot well stand together. If you have any love to Christ, the life of love will make you move best in your proper place: Oh therefore love much, and so think much and speak much of, and converse much with, and do much, and suffer much for the Lord Jesus Christ; content not your selves with doing small things for him, that hath done and suffered much for you; if you can do but little, yet set God on work by being fervent and frequent in prayer, not only that Christ may be honoured in your selves, but also in your families, and in all churches and kingdoms of the world. If you cannot do much, yet maintain alive a will to do much, which is accepted as if you did, 2 Cor. 8. 17. If thou art a poor man, and hast nothing to give; yet keep a heart as liberal as a prince; if you can do but little your selves, yet encourage others that they may, thou art not a preacher called to convert souls, yet do thou encourage the messengers of Christ in their work, by thy prayers, counsel, help, and at the last day the conversion of souls shall be attributed unto thee, as well as unto them; if thou canst not do any good, yet prevent what evil thou canst in thy place; to keep off judgments, at least to delay them: mourn thou for other mens sins, as if they were

were thine own, and so the Lord may pity and pardon them, and it may be convert them; who shall do more good it may be, than ever thou canst do: let the Lord Jesus be in thy thoughts the first in the morning, and the last at night; do what thou canst, nay, go continually to him to enable thee to do more than thou of thy self canst; and mourn bitterly, and lament daily what thou hast not done, either through want of ability or will: rememb'reng his love to thee, that he came out of his Father's bosom for thee, wept for thee, bled for thee, poured out his life, nay, his soul to death for thee, is now risen for thee, gone to heaven for thee, sits at God's right hand, and rules all the world for thee, makes intercession continually for thee, and at the end of the world will come again for thee: who hast loved him here, that thou mightest live for ever with him then.

But is this *our* life, in these evil and like-warm times? How many be there that believe in Christ, that they may live as they list? If to drink, and whore, and scoff, and blaspheme; if to shake a lock, and follow every fond fashion; if to cross and cringe before a piece of wood; if to be weary of the word, and outwardly zealous for long prayers; if to seek for purity of ordinances in churches, and to maintain impurity in hearts, in shops, in families; if to set our hearts upon Farms and merchandizes, and so to be covetous; if to set up our own selves, and parts, and gifts, with a secret disdain of God's ministers; if to cry down learning, and set up ignorance, if to set up Christ, and destroy sanctification and obedience; if to be a sect-master of some odd opinions; if to crack the

the ~~not~~ of some superlunary and monkish notions, & high-flown speculations ; if to hear much, & do little ; if to have a name to live, and yet dead at the heart ; if this be to live the life of love, we have many that live this life ; the Lord Jesus wants not love, if this be to love : but Oh woe unto you, if you thus requite the Lord, foolish people and unwise ! The Lord knows we may complain as Paul did, *every man minds his own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ* ; none in comparison of that huge number that think they are religious enough, if they be baptized, and say that they believe in Jesus Christ : verily the time draws near wherein the Lord will come for *fruits* from his *vineyard*, and if he finds it not, assuredly he will not be beholding to us for obedience, he can raise his glory out of other people ; and there carry his gospel to them who shall *bring forth the fruits* of it ; the Lord will shortly *lay his ax unto the root of our tree* ; and if we will not serve the Lord in this good land in the abundance of peace and mercy, we shall serve our enemies in hunger, cold, and nakedness ; if we will not serve him in love, we must serve our enemies in fear ; do not think that the Lord will be put off with venerable names and titles, shadows, and pictures ; what is most mens profession at this day but a meer paint ? which may serve to colour them while they live, but will never comfort them (unless conscience be asleep), when they come to die. Oh, take heed of such formality ; I can never think enough of David's expression, *Psal. 119. 161. I have kept thy commandments, and I love them exceedingly* ; should he not have said first, *I have loved thy commandments, and so*.

so have kept them? doubtless he did so; but he ran here in a holy and most heavenly circle, I have kept them, and loved them; and loved them, and kept them; if we love Christ we also shall live such a life of love in our measure; and his commandments will be most dear, when himself is most precious.

F I N I S.



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